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ABSTRACT

This collection of papers directed toward the teacher of English as a second language (ESL) and the teacher of standard English as a second dialect (ESD) is divided into three sections. The first focuses on the nature of language and second language learning with such essays as "Teaching English as a Foreign Language: An Overview," "Language and Acculturation," and "The Nature of Language and Language Learning." The second section on critical issues in teaching ESL and ESD contains "Bilingualism and Bidialectalism," "Teaching Standard English as a Second Language or Dialect: The Unanswered Questions, the Successes, and the Promise," "On the Conditions of Bilingualism," and "The Future of ESOL: Continuity or Generation Gap?" The final section on principles and strategies for teaching ESL and ESD contains "Attitudes of the ESL and the SESD Teacher," "Some Strategies for Teaching Standard English as a Second Dialect," "TESOL: Methods and Materials in Early Childhood Education," and "Some Principles of Bilingual and Bidialectal Education." Contributing authors include Robert M. Willis, William Mackey, Albert H. Marckwardt, Robert DiPietro, James Alatis, Robert Kaplan, David Harris, Harold B. Allen, Virginia Allen, Muriel Saville-Troike, and Beryl Loftman Bailey. (HOD)

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ESSAYS ON

# TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

# AS A SECOND DIALECT

Edited by Robert P. Fox
Director, English Language Institute
The American University

AS 200 899

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## Preface

In the spring of each year, the National Council of Teachers of English sponsors a series of institutes concerned with some aspect of English. The spring institutes held in Tallahassee, Albuquerque, and Albany in the early seventies were directed at a highly specialized audience—the teacher of English as a second language and the teacher of standard English as a second dialect. Some 250 participants came together for intensive three-and-a-half-day institutes, in which they listened, discussed, debated, argued, and, hopefully, learned.

NCTE has long been interested in the teaching of English as a second language, and was one of the sponsors of a series of conferences that led to the establishment in 1966 of a new professional organization—the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). The creation of TESOL resulted in a clearinghouse for the exchange of ideas by teachers at all levels of education who, with the exception of university teachers, had been more or less left to their own devices. (In the case of the university teachers, the Association of Teachers of English as a Second Language—a section of the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs, an organization devoted to the interests of foreign students on American university campuses—functioned as a clearinghouse and meeting ground.) NCTE, since the inception of TESOL, has not limited its interest in "seconds" to English as a second language, but has become actively involved in the study and concerns of teaching standard English as a second dialect. It is this ongoing interest of NCTE in English both as a second language and as a second dialect that prompted it to sponsor this series of spring institutes.

The beginning of a new decade, 1970, was an ideal time for the profession to pause and take stock of itself—its past and future. The linguistic revolution started by Noam Chomsky in the late 1950s had affected and changed the philosophy of many teachers of English as a second language. The civil rights movement culminating in the sixties also brought to the fore the question of second dialect teaching. It was assumed that the two "seconds" were compatible and that the methods of teaching English as a second language would be effective in teaching English as a second dialect.

The marriage in this institute of English as a second language and standard English as a second dialect proved to be a most interesting one—though a shaky and at times shaking one. The teaching of English as a second language was accepted, discussed, and debated by all the participants. However, the very validity of the idea of teaching standard English as a second dialect was questioned. Some defended it as being a necessary evil created by an economic system that demanded some sort of functional bidialectalism. Others described it as the creation of a racist society. To complicate the situation further, there was considerable disagreement as to what standard English was, if indeed such a thing existed at all.

Professor Sol Saporta of the University of Washington, in the abstract of his talk "Language and Racism," has probably stated most succinctly the problems inherent in the teaching of one dialect of English to speakers of another dialect: "There are essentially four views one can take regarding the teaching of one dialect of English to speakers of another dialect, for example the teaching of so-called standard English to speakers of black English. (1) Speakers of black English are 'verbally impoverished.' Their language is inherently incapable of expressing either complex or abstract thoughts; to a certain extent, therefore, they may be viewed as hardly having a language at all, and exposing them to English is in effect exposing them to a 'bona fide' language for the first time. (2) Black English is a dialect of English with its own system of rules, which, however, is socially unacceptable. It is therefore in the best interest of blacks to replace their dialect of English with one that is acceptable. (3) Black English is a dialect of English which is appropriate under one set of circumstances, but it must be supplemented by standard English in order for blacks to function successfully in society at large.

"It is important to realize that all three of these views are reflections of society's racism, and that the difference between the first view and the other two is only that the former is, in addition, linguistically untenable.

"The question facing society in general and educational institutions in particular is how to provide blacks (and whites) with the necessary skills without catering, explicitly or implicitly, to the racism which permeates society. An assumption which might provide the basis for an alternative position is this: (4) It is possible to teach a speaker of any dialect the skills of reading and writing, in his dialect, without implying that he must somehow change the way he speaks."

There were three major areas of concern at the institutes, all of which are interdependent. The speakers and participants examined in depth the nature of language and language learning, especially as it related to the teaching of English as a second language or second dialect. They examined, too, the critical issues involved in the teaching of English as a second language (ESL) and English as a second dialect

(ESD), and tried to come to grips with the problems, both moral and humanistic, of teaching the latter. This led to the deeper issues of language and racism, and of whether ESL and ESD should even be considered as related disciplines. In examining the third concern, the principles and strategies for teaching English as a second language and standard English as a second dialect, the participants were again divided as to whether second language techniques could effectively be used in second dialect teaching, if indeed we should even concern ourselves with second dialect work.

The conclusions reached in these three areas were as varied as were the institute participants themselves, but each individual left with a greater awareness of and sympathy for the problems of his fellow participants.

The papers read at the institutes are presented here, edited slightly for print and grouped according to the three major areas of concern, to focus the reader's attention on the theoretical and practical issues confronted at the institutes. These papers provide an excellent overview of the past, an insight into the problems of the present, and some hope for solutions in the future. The institutes provided the impetus for change which it is hoped many of the participants were able to effect in their own situations, and since many of the problems existing at the time of the institutes still exist today, hopefully the papers in this small volume will provide the same incentive for the reader to come to grips with those problems.

As director of the institutes, with the responsibility for selecting the speakers and preparing their papers for publication, I am allowed to put my name in this book; however, any credit for the success of the institutes or of this book must be shared with a man who sees no task as impossible and no obstacle as too great to overcome. This man is Rod Morisset, Assistant Executive Secretary of the National Council of Teachers of English, who was the guiding force of the institutes. When sickness prevented him from being in Tallahassee and Albuquerque, he was represented by two very capable members of the NCTE staff, Richard Adler and Raymond Crisp.

The local chairmen—Richard Lee for the Tallahassee Institute, Robert White for the Albuquerque Institute, and Ruth Blackburn for the Albany Institute—planned well and met the inevitable emergencies with energy, good sense, and good humor. Not only the efforts of all these individuals, but also the efforts of those presenting papers, made the institutes "experiences" for all who participated.

Robert P. Fox
The American University

# 1 THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE AND SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

# Teaching English as a Foreign Language: An Overview

Robert M. Willis

The application of the theories of linguistic science to the teaching of English as a foreign or second language has been increasing steadily since the 1940s. Previously in the United States, foreign language teaching had been generally carried on through the "grammar-translation" method which required the student to memorize rules, conjugations, and vocabulary lists. Proof of the validity of this method was based on the fact that some students were able to recite isolated word forms, pass written tests, and translate sentences from English into the foreign language and from the foreign language into English. But beginning in the forties with the work of such linguists as Charles C. Fries, the emphasis turned increasingly toward applying linguistic theories to teaching English as a second language. Dr. Fries' contribution is evident when one examines the research and writing of the structural linguists of that time. Teachers too were influenced, and the following statement reflects the attitude that had gained popularity by the early 1960s: "In recent years linguistic studies have radically altered language teaching. The traditional method of learning a new language by studying printed words and the rules governing their arrangement has been largely replaced by the audiolingual approach. Language is now considered as a set of speech habits and the rules of grammar as a description of these habits. Thus, today, language is taught essentially as a tool of verbal communication."[1]

This approach to language learning as a tool of verbal communication gained impetus during World War II when the United States government needed personnel with a practical knowledge of foreign languages. According to Fries, this need could not be satisfied to any significant degree from the ranks of college graduates who had studied foreign languages under the "grammar-translation" method.[2] Therefore, it became necessary for the government to set up its

[1] Audrey Wright, "Initial Techniques in Teaching English as a Second Language," *The ABC English as a Second Language Bulletin*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1964.

[2] Charles C. Fries, *Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1945).

own language training programs for military and civilian personnel who would be working in various parts of the world with people who spoke foreign languages. "After the war, the widespread use of tape recorders and other audio devices made it possible to provide authentic spoken models of foreign language as substitutes for native informants used in the government training sessions. This technique together with contrastive studies of the target and the native languages, written for the language teacher, brought the linguistic approach to a high level of effectiveness."[3]

The theories and techniques of the linguistic approach have been received with criticism as well as with praise. Wilga Rivers, for one, challenges not only the results but also the basic assumptions of the "pattern-practice" method.[4] It can be stated without fear of vehement contradiction that pattern practice in the public schools did not achieve the success attributed to the government language programs. However, it must be admitted that the "linguistic" method started off in the public schools under extremely difficult circumstances, to say the least. As the students studying English as a foreign language in our schools were not an academically select group (as were the United States military and government trainees), and as they did not have the motivation (career, rank, and so forth) of the trainees, nor the time required for highly intensive study, it was unrealistic to expect results comparable to those achieved under the very special wartime situation. However, experience with the "new" approach revealed a great deal about the teaching and learning process for non-native speakers of English. Among the most significant lessons learned were that new and better materials must be developed, that teachers must be educated and trained in the dynamics of second language learning, and that teaching aids such as tape recorders, language labs, and visual aids in themselves cannot achieve success. The value of such aids depends upon how effectively they have been made an integral and productive part of the method being employed.

This brief statement of past events should serve as a partial frame of reference for the present debate in teaching English as a foreign language or for foreign language teaching in general. There are textbooks in French, Spanish, Italian, and so forth that use pattern practice as part of their methodology and therefore are targets in the new controversy. Although there are textbooks published recently whose authors indicate their awareness of the need to move beyond pattern practice, it is extremely difficult to find a textbook that has successfully achieved this goal and received widespread acceptance or rejection

[3] Robert Lado, *Language Teaching* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 6.

[4] Wilga M. Rivers, *The Psychologist and the Foreign Language Teacher* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964).

by the teachers who have examined or used such texts. My experience as a supervisor and consultant in TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) has permitted me to discuss texts and materials with a wide variety of teachers in extremely diverse situations. Equally determined supporters or detractors can be found for the Fries Series, the Lado Series, the English 900 Series, the Grant Taylor texts, the Dixson texts, and a variety of others. Teachers seem to be constantly searching for the "perfect" textbook, yet it must be understood that there can be no textbook that would be "perfect" for all teachers. A textbook is "perfect" only to the extent to which it satisfies the needs of a particular teacher and a particular situation, and no two situations will be exactly the same. Students vary, their needs differ, and teachers represent a multitude of personalities and a cross section of training. However, there is at least one thing that can be said to be common to all language teaching, and that is the desire to have the student learn the language being taught. Oddly, this apparent cliché at times seems to be the bond that permits opponents to continue to talk to each other.

It is the question of how a language can best be learned and best be taught that in part has generated the current controversy. As stated previously, Wilga Rivers expresses serious reservations regarding the claims made for the effectiveness of pattern practice in foreign language learning. And Noam Chomsky, in his statements at the Northeast Conference of 1966, challenged the validity of the direct and uncritical application of linguistic theory to teaching languages: "I am, frankly, rather skeptical about the significance for the teaching of languages, of such insights and understanding as have been attained in linguistics and psychology."[5] He also said that, "It is possible—even likely—that principles of psychology and linguistics, and research in these disciplines, may supply insights useful to the language teacher. But this must be demonstrated, and cannot be presumed. It is the language teacher himself who must validate or repute any specific proposal. There is very little in psychology or linguistics that he can accept on faith."[6]

The theory held by structuralists is in part set forth in the following statement by Chomsky: "Linguists have had their full share in perpetuating the myth that linguistic behavior is habitual and that a fixed stock of patterns is acquired through practice and used as the basis for 'analogy.'"[7] To Chomsky, and those who support the generative-grammar theory, "Language is not a 'habit structure.' Ordinary linguistic

[5] Noam Chomsky, "Linguistic Theory," in *Language Teaching: Broader Contexts* (Northeast Conference Reports of the Working Committees), ed. Robert G. Mead, Jr. (New York: Modern Language Association, 1966), p. 43.

[6] Ibid., p. 45.

[7] Ibid., p. 44.

behavior characteristically involves innovation, formation of new sentences and new patterns in accordance with rules of great abstractness and intricacy."[8] This is the basis of his thesis on the creative aspect of language use.

In the early 1950s, understandably, many teachers adopted pattern-practice techniques because certain research in linguistic science had demonstrated language to be "a set of habits." Currently there is a move in a new direction. As linguistic science has also demonstrated that language is "rule-governed behavior,"[9] there are many teachers "ready to seize upon a new slogan and begin to inculcate rules in the hope of establishing 'rule-governed' behavior, even though they have only a vague concept of what this phrase can mean as it has been used by linguists or psychologists."[10] One of the reasons for adopting the "rule-governed" approach is that teachers want to move beyond mechanical drills and make possible greater language proficiency than that permitted by the mere practice of grammatical patterns.

The debate between the audiolingual method developed by the structuralists and the cognitive approach supported by the generative grammarians rages and will probably become more intensified. Criticism of the pattern-practice method is generally based on the fact that the method and its techniques were often improperly employed. Students were locked into mechanical drills carried far beyond necessity. The importance of "meaning" in aural-oral practice was vague, and the structuralists' theory of cognitive learning based on generalization by analogy became obscured by the "over learning" of structures. Accepting then that the structuralists are aware of the need for cognitive learning and make provision for same in their methodology, and that the cognitive-transformational grammarians recognize the basic interdependence of structure and meaning in their approach, it would appear that there is common ground here that is not being exploited.

It seems, then, that certain steps may be taken to increase the effectiveness of a program in English as a foreign or second language. First, there must be a clear idea about the nature and functions of language. Second, realistic goals must be identified and stated. Third, appropriate methods that will make the desired learning possible must be introduced and developed. These steps are not easily accomplished, since the selection of an appropriate method is an extremely difficult task. This difficulty is due in part to the differences of opinions concerning language usage and language acquisition. Much could be

[8] Ibid., p. 44.

[9] Sol Saporta, "Applied Linguistics and Generative Grammar," in *Trends in Language Teaching*, ed. Albert Valdman (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. 86.

[10] Wilga M. Rivers, "Grammar in Foreign Language Teaching," *The Modern Language Journal* 52 (1968): 207.

accomplished if the two camps, the structuralists on the one hand and the cognitive-transformationalists on the other, would increase their dialogue, temper their debate, and communicate their theories to the teachers for implementation in the classroom where the final judgments must be made.

## Language and Acculturation

William Francis Mackey

This is intended to be a broad sketch of the position of language in the process of acculturation, in particular that of the immigrant. It is not meant to be either a technical paper, a theoretical model, or a research report, but rather an overview of a vast field showing some of the important problem areas.

In the process of acculturation, almost all human activities may be involved; and although language is one of them, it is at the same time a reflection of all of them. It is important to understand why this is so. To realize what is implied in this primacy of language, we must situate it in its everyday place in society, take a look at its essential make-up, explain its dominance in education, and examine the problems it creates, particularly for adults obliged to assimilate a new culture and function as citizens in a new land. Let us first consider the role of language in society.

### Language in Society

To appreciate the importance that language has in our everyday lives, we need to imagine for a moment a city in which there is no language at all, no signs, no newspapers, no letters, nobody speaking to anybody. A little reflection will convince you that such a city is impossible; a city can neither function without language nor be built without one. For language is what keeps people together and enables them to live and to work together. This is so true that the absence of language is considered either abnormal or disquieting. Seeing an acquaintance without so much as saying *hello* would be interpreted as an unfriendly or abnormal act. Much of our talk has as its function the avoidance of this dreaded antisocial silence. It is small talk, but essential small talk. And in making acquaintances, small talk always precedes big talk—weather and sports before getting into questions of personality or politics.

In the organization of the world's work, language has a function of prime importance in education, commerce, manufacturing, agriculture, politics, radio, television, motion pictures, newspapers, law, and

all interpersonal communication. When the great Chinese philosopher Confucius was asked what he would first do if obliged to govern a nation, he replied that he would first deal with the problems of language. For, as he said, "If language is not correct, *then* what is said is not what is meant. Then what ought to be done, remains undone. If this remains undone, morals and the arts (all human activities) will deteriorate and justice will go astray. If justice goes astray, people will be helpless. Hence, the proper functioning of language in society matters above everything else."

Language is the most important instrument that a society and the individuals who comprise it have at their disposal. It is not only an instrument of communication between peoples; it is a means of remembering, classifying, preserving—of dealing with all we know and have ever known. It is like a complex, multiformed set of containers in which we can store everything we have ever known or experienced, and the shape and number of these containers depend on the needs and experiences of those who speak the language.

When I was in Baffin Land a few years ago, I met people who had never seen a tree. They and their ancestors had always lived in that part of the Arctic, situated well above the tree line. It was not surprising, then, that their language had no word for any of the varieties of trees which surround us here. Contrast this with the vocabulary of the inhabitants of the Ivory Coast where more than five hundred varieties of trees flourish in the tropical rain forest, most of them, I am told, having distinct names in the local languages. It is equally not surprising that the languages of peoples inhabiting these tropical forests make little or no distinction between varieties of ice and snow. I had read the much-quoted example of "the four Eskimo names for snow," but had no idea that in Baffin Land, I would be able to isolate twenty-one distinct Eskimo words for this low temperature phenomenon—caked snow, fluffy snow, falling snow—and some concepts quite untranslatable, except by long explicatory sentences.[1] In other words, the Eskimos need more and different concepts for this important reality of their environment than anyone else, and they can only use, communicate, and think about these concepts if they give names to them and incorporate these into their vocabulary.

Anthropologists and linguists have furnished many examples of differences in the linguistic classification of natural phenomena. One of the most demonstrable examples is that of the differences in the way identical perceptions of color are put into different categories according to the language of the observer. Although man can distinguish more than seven million colors, according to the Optical Society of America, no single language is likely to have names for a tenth of that number; English, for example, has some three thousand color

[1] W. F. Mackey, "Concept, Categories as Measures of Culture Distance," in *Man, Language and Society*, ed. S. K. Ghosh (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1972).

words. Languages differ greatly in the way they name the most observable effects of the light spectrum—even in the criteria used to label the many effects of light—hue, brightness, reflection. When the same criteria are used, there are likely to be differences in the number of labels and what they cover. The Bassa of Liberia get by with two basic color terms, whereas other African and many European languages seem to need about half a dozen. Even languages with the same number of basic hues do not cut the spectrum up in the same way. In Welsh, for example, one of the colors includes part of what is labeled *green* in English and part of what is considered as blue. When an area of the spectrum does happen to correspond in any two languages, there is not always agreement on what objects can be described as having which colors. Both English and French, for example, recognize the color brown (F. *brun*), but brown shoes in French are either yellow (*jaune*) or red (*marron*); brown (*gris*) paper, brown (*bis*) bread, and brown sugar (*cassonade*) are not seen as being brown (*brun*) at all.

The perception of color is not the only example of the way different languages categorize in a great variety of different ways the most basic and universal of observable phenomena. Likewise there are vast differences in the segmentation of the time continuum and the space continuum. Criteria used to create temporal categories vary greatly even between genetically related languages—aspect, mood, sequence, validity, involvement, voice, and several others—forcing the users of the language to make certain temporal distinctions which speakers of other tongues have no need to make.

In other words, different languages develop their different vocabularies by cutting up the reality which their speakers experience according to the needs of these speakers. It is the speakers themselves who inherit the language and constantly modify it according to circumstances that change from one generation to the next, so that language always remains an instrument which is best adapted to what individual people have to communicate. The great linguist Edward Sapir has said that "Language is the most significant and colossal work that the human spirit has evolved—nothing short of a finished form of expression for all communicable experience."[2] It is, as it were, the unconscious cumulative creation of many generations of speakers who have had to use the resources of their language to deal with the ever-changing world. Sapir, a Canadian government worker in the 1920s as a specialist in native American Indian languages, was moved to consider language almost as a communal art form and remarked that "Language is the most massive and inclusive art we know, a mountainous and anonymous work of unconscious generations."[3]

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[2] Edward Sapir, *Language* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1921), p. 235.

[3] Ibid., p. 235.

## The Nature of Language

Language is not only a matter of words; it is much more. In fact, one of the greatest errors to make about a language is to identify it with its dictionary. Words are indeed the easiest part of the language, but there is also the question of knowing how to put them together and to utter the resulting sequences. Much has been said about the nature of language by experts from many sciences—physiology, psychology, psychiatry, sociology, anthropology, engineering, and linguistics. Because language penetrates and permeates all human activity, the study of language is not the monopoly of any one discipline but the property of many. I have no intention here of going into all aspects of language. I shall limit myself to some essential traits in an attempt to determine what makes a language a language. And I shall conclude that language has a code made of signs that are both arbitrary and conventional, and that these signs have meanings, values, and functions which form a system of systems.[4]

The first and most obvious fact about a language is that it is—or at least has—a code. Although by far the most important, it is not the only code we use in our everyday lives; there is also music, which is made up of notes and scales, various sequences of which produce a great variety of songs and symphonies—of musical messages, as it were. There are also numbers composed of digits which we use for a variety of purposes, including telephone numbers. If you look at the enormous directory of a large telephone system, you will find hundreds of thousands of telephone numbers—all created out of the ten basic digits.

With the thirty or forty sounds of a language, however, we can do much better, not only because there are more sounds than numbers, but because, unlike numbers of the telephone system, the words of a language can be of different lengths ranging from the single unit indefinite article *a* to such freight-train words as *antidisestablishmentarianism*. If you look at a big national dictionary like the *Webster's Third New International* or the great *Oxford English Dictionary*, you are likely to find about half a million different words, and this is far from exhausting all possibilities. There is plenty of room left for other equally large national dictionaries to take care of the needs of the world's remaining three thousand-odd languages. But these words are themselves elements of the code of the language, and, combined into sequences called sentences, they can produce a number of different messages or texts, which can be indeed infinite—filling libraries with millions of books, the air waves with an endless stream of speech, and all our working lives with a torrent of interpersonal talk.

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[4] W. F. Mackey, *Language Teaching Analysis* (London: Longman Group, 1965; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), Part I.

But words are not the only units of which the code of a language is composed; they are only the most obvious. There are also, for example, the morphemes which vary the shapes of words, changing *foot* into *feet* and *go* into *went*. There are the collocations which combine words into new units like *put up with*, having nothing to do with *put*, *up*, or *with*. These units—words, morphemes, collocations, and others—combine into sequences of different shapes and sizes to produce sentences following an order predetermined by the allowable structures of a language. In English, the sequence *put up with* is permitted and has meaning, whereas the reverse, *with up put*, is impossible and meaningless. In English you say *I have given it to him*, and not *I it to him have given*, which is a structure you would be allowed to use in French (*Je le lui ai donné*). Thus, all languages have codes, and each code is composed of units and structures.

The second point I want to make is that these units operate as signs; that is, they stand for something else. A red light at a street corner is more than just an ordinary red light such as you might find on a Christmas tree; it is a sign of something, it means something over and above its own make-up, which permits us even to forget its color and call it a stoplight because that is what it means. Similarly, the words and other units of a language are also used as signs to stand for something else. They stand for anything we want them to, just as numbers stand for anything we say they do. Neither words nor numbers have meaning in themselves. A man is no better or worse for the digits in his telephone number, on his license plate, or on his social security card.

The signs of a language—all its words—are purely arbitrary. People brought up to speak only one language have difficulty comprehending this. Since the things they see have always invariably and unalterably been associated with the words they know, there seems to be some necessary interrelationship. It is like people getting so attached to their arbitrarily given name that they cannot imagine being called anything else. In a semantic test, unilingual children believed that certain four-legged animals of unclean habits were called *pigs* because they were so dirty. What else could you call them, since *cochon*, *porco*, *Schwein*, *hoiros*, *svinja*, *marrana*, and *disno* were not available in their language?

There is no more necessary relationship between animals and their names than between persons and their names, or between anything and how we name it. The number *five* could easily have been called something else—*cinq*, *cinque*, *cinco*, *fünf*, *öt*, *pét*, *pende*, *pjats*, or even *punch*, as it is in Hindi, which by the way, is where the drink came from, having been reduced to the name *five* or *punch*, since it contained five ingredients. Or instead of *five* we could have used the word *one* to mean five. All language signs are arbitrary. But that does not mean we can change them at will. They may be arbitrary, but they are also more conventional than anything that man has known. And this is my third point about language.

Not only are these arbitrary language signs conventional, but they have to be. Otherwise no one could learn a language. Imagine the confusion if the same substance were called *coffee* one day, *soap* the next, and *house* the day after! The fact that a word is arbitrary and conventional does not mean it has no value. It has value very much as a dollar bill has value. The question of what a dollar is worth is a good one in these times. We might answer, "Not very much today and maybe less tomorrow, but more than the paper on which it is printed." I could take the same sort of paper and print the same material on it, and end up in jail. Why? Because according to convention, though quite arbitrary, only one type of paper printed at a certain place, in a certain way, and under certain conditions, is considered to have any value. Its value, likewise, according to convention, is a hundred cents, and it can be changed into coins or goods of equivalent value.

Words also have values and can be used to represent concepts. Some words represent only one concept, but most words represent several and consequently have multiple meanings. I was looking up the word *run* in the *Oxford English Dictionary* the other day and was able to count more than four hundred recorded meanings, such as, *Run for your life* and *These colours don't run*, in each of which there is, by the way, a double meaning.[5]

Words must be capable of carrying a great many possible meanings. Even with half a million words we cannot name everything we want to name. Life is made up of so many different things that each cannot possibly have a different name.

A language sign may be used to signify different things, because when used to produce words or actions, its meaning is clear for all practical purposes. These multimeaning, arbitrary, and conventional language signs are some of the units of which language is made. But language is not merely a collection of these units any more than a house is the same thing as a pile of bricks, wood, and plaster. The code of the language arranges its elements into a number of interrelated systems, including the systems of sounds, grammar, and vocabulary. Once you have decided what to say, the system forces you to follow certain rules when saying it.

Suppose you start with the words "I'd like some ———," and you want something to light a fire. To fit the right word in will call into play the grammatical system, forcing you to use the plural of countable nouns like *match*, and the system of sounds forces you to pronounce the plural *s* like a /z/ to give you some *matches*. The type and number of rules and relationships vary greatly from one language to the next. If everything in every system of a language is thus interrelated with everything else into a complex network of relationships—into a system

[5]W. F. Mackey and J. G. Savard, "The Indices of Coverage: A New Dimension in Lexicometrics," *International Review of Applied Linguistics* 2 & 3 (1967): 71–121.

of systems—it is a wonder how people ever succeed in learning a language.

There is much more to language than this; there is the question of its changing nature, its variations in time and space, the functioning of redundancy, and so forth. But I have pointed out, I think, the essential characteristics. Language is a system of systems composed of arbitrary and conventional signs forming a code suitable for communication.

**Language in Education**

One of the most amazing things in life is that this highly complex system of systems is mastered by any normal child before he starts school. Indeed, all education is based on this assumption. A child without a grasp of the language the school takes for granted is at an enormous disadvantage.[6] This assumed language skill of the child entering school is used for a number of purposes, including information, action, and emotion. Language is used to transmit information and explain the world around us, e.g., *The earth is round, Water seeks its own level.* Secondly, it is used to get the right sort of action, *Cross the street when the man waves, Stop, Turn right, Sign here.* All forms of organized activity, all industry and commerce, and all office and factory work are based on this use of language; for example, *Send us three cases by express, Leave the key at the desk, Give K. B. Shadow his paycheck tomorrow.*

A third use of language is to arouse feelings and form opinions. We can bring people to associate specific words with certain desirable or undesirable ideas. This use of language ranges from poetry to propaganda and includes the niceties of politeness (*Good morning, Thank you*) and the non-niceties of blasphemy. It can both infuse and confuse the other two functions. In advertising, it can combine with action-arousing as in *Keep America Green,* or it can confuse and contradict the informative, as it often does in poetry. When the poet Shelley wrote in his ode, "To a Skylark,"

> Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
> Bird thou never wert,

he was not making much of a contribution to the science of ornithology. For only a poet could be permitted to state that a skylark is not a bird and never was one. This is akin to the magical use of language, where action is allegedly induced through an abnormal use of words.

The basis for using language for information, action, or emotion in educational content is the assumption that the child has already mastered the essentials. This implies that the child has complete control

[6] W. F. Mackey, *Bilingual Education in a Binational School* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, Publishers, 1972), Introduction.

of the phonological and grammatical systems of the language and a comprehension vocabulary of some three to five thousand words, covering in the order of 95 to 98 percent of the most frequent items. In other words, it means that the teacher expects to talk normally to the child and to receive normal responses. If the language of the home is not that of the school, no such assumption can be made, even if the language of the school is shared at home with another language. In such a case, the child will not have the same learning equipment as other children from homes where both languages are identical.

The difference may be felt in a great range of difficulties, from a slight lack of comprehension to complete unintelligibility. The teacher does not have the words with which to teach, and the learner does not have the vocabulary through which he can learn.

His comprehension vocabulary may be zero, or he may have at least partially the same vocabulary as the monolingual children. But which part of his vocabulary is like that of his classmates? The children from non-English-speaking homes may listen just as attentively as the others, but what do they understand, and how much?

The range of comprehension may be so great as to place each individual child in a different learning category. In such situations the unilingual teacher is likely to feel helpless, to blame the foreign pupil's lack of comprehension on his stupidity or wrong-headedness and wonder why English, which is such an easy language understood by most other children, should not just be absorbed. Most unilinguals think their own language is easy, but no language is inherently simple or difficult. It depends upon who is learning it and from what base. English may be just as difficult for Spanish speakers as Spanish is for English speakers. Let the teacher pause for a while and imagine himself having to do his schooling in a language he only partially understands, and he may begin to feel the way his foreign learners feel.

Whether or not it is a good thing to speak one language at home and another at school is a moot question, depending on the uses of bilingualism. And here a fable about a mother mouse and her young may be instructive.

> Once upon a time, a mother mouse was training her little one in the art of self-preservation. "If you hear a *meow*," she said, "sit tight and don't venture out of the hole." And the little mouse heard a *meow* and stayed still as instructed. A few moments later the little mouse heard a *bowwow*, and, with Mother Mouse's okay, ventured out and was quickly seized and eaten by a big black cat who, with a satisfied smile, remarked, "That's one of the advantages of being bilingual."

The moral is that there are indeed advantages in being bilingual, but for some people there are also disadvantages. And your non-English-

speaking youngster may come from a home where the disadvantages predominate.

The father may have come to this country with little or no knowledge of English. Like so many immigrants, he struggles to master enough of the language to make his needs known and to understand those of others. But this is a mere minimum of what he must do. As an immigrant, he has to be able to use the language fluently enough to hold a job and well enough to be accepted as a member of the community in which he lives. For it is above all through language that he will take his place as a member of the community. People tend to assume that "he speaks like one of us" is the same as "he is one of us."

**Language Problems of Immigrants**

There are now throughout the world millions of people making a great effort to become bilingual, people whose jobs, well-being, and social future depend upon their ability to master a new language.[7] Some of the luckier ones have already learned the new language in school or are still young enough to master it after their arrival in the new land. But many are confronted with what seems an impossible task. Some have no aptitude whatsoever for languages; others feel too old to learn a new one. Many thousands of middle-aged refugees, for example, who in their own countries were successful and respected business and professional men, have had to accept what they consider menial and degrading work because they cannot meet the new professional requirements. And many times these professional requirements include a firm grasp of a particular language. The immigrant's knowledge of the new language may be good enough for everyday communication, but be far below professional standards.

Psychologically, an immigrant of this type lives in a sort of twilight world, midway between that of his homeland and that of his adopted country. His language handicap penetrates the very structure of his personality. Where the native is simple, he is complex. Where the native is automatically supported by his innate habits of speech, the bilingual immigrant has to choose between different forms of expression which, as he becomes less familiar with his mother tongue and not yet familiar enough with his new language, seem inadequate equivalents of what he has in his mind.

From early childhood the immigrant's thoughts and feelings were molded by a cultural tradition quite different from that of his new country. These thoughts and feelings first came to him through the language spoken in his home, and it was in this language that he

[7] W. F. Mackey, *Bilingualism as a World Problem* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1967), Chapter 1.

acquired his most intimate and most significant understanding. The very ways in which he came to consider his experience, both concrete and abstract, were largely determined by those words and sentences learned as an infant in the context of his culture, which eventually gave him a language for handling all experience. In a new language environment, he is faced with the problem of dealing with this same experience by means of different words and sentences. But he sees and hears and feels as he does largely because his language habits have made him look at things through the spectacles of his mother tongue, as it were. And it is these original language habits, so much a part of his thoughts and feelings, that stand in the way of complete mastery of the new language.

For the adult immigrant, the second language, no matter how well he learns to speak it, may always remain but an outer skin without depth and human warmth. Often his existence may be a vacillation between an inner or family life associated with his mother tongue and an outer or social life conducted in a foreign language. Some immigrants have embraced this dual role with enthusiasm; more have accepted it with resignation. Still others have tried to get away from it by turning their backs on the old language in an effort to escape the disadvantages of belonging to an ethnic minority.

And yet they may be disappointed. With all their good will toward the new language, they may fail to achieve a fluent command of it; indeed, some never get beyond the stage of bare intelligibility. Why? Perhaps for some of the same reasons that thousands of younger immigrants, after studying the second language in school for five or six years, are likewise quite unable to speak it.

What a native speaker considers an easy little word may in reality involve dozens of complex habits which he has learned so well that he hardly realizes they exist. Take, for example, the word *go*. The immigrant has to learn to add an *s* in the third person present singular (*goes*), and also that this *s* is really not an *s* when spoken, but a *z*—not /gous/, but /gouz/. And if the event happened yesterday, he must learn not to change *o* to *a*, that is, /ʌ/ to /ei/, as he did for *come*, but to say *went*, an entirely new word. He must also learn that you go *to* a place, and that *to* becomes *at* once you are there, although in his own language it may be *at* in both cases, as it is in French. He must also know that if certain other words are combined with *go*, the verb may take on an entirely different meaning as in *go in for something*—a phrase which is likely to be expressed by separate verbs in his own language. He also has to keep in mind the different tenses that may be indicated by going: I am *going* there now, I am *going* there tomorrow, and I am *going to go* there some day.

There is also the whole problem of meaning and patterns of meaning. The immigrant must know that *go* means any sort of movement away from a point, and that it includes walking, running, riding, or flying, and not simply walking, as it does in its German counterpart *gehen*.

He has to understand its function as distinct from other verbs of motion like *come*, so that he can use either *go* or *come*, depending on whether the motion is toward a place or away from it, and not base the distinction on motion *into* a place or *out of it*, as he would if his mother tongue were a language like Hebrew. He must know all this well enough so that unconsciously, in the split second he has in which to utter the word, he may succeed in using it correctly.

If the mastery of a small word like *go* is so complicated, it is certainly not a simple matter to become fluent even in the everyday vocabulary of a strange language, along with its grammar, its phonetics, and its social usage. You can hardly expect the average person simply to "pick up" this sort of thing. It is not surprising that so many of those who try to pick up a language only succeed in getting tangled in it. For language is not merely a list of words; it is a complex system of habits built up in the individual. The immigrant must not only regroup his previous experiences; he must also develop and relate them to a new system of habits which will correctly, fluently, and independently operate a new system of sounds, structures, words, and meanings. He may develop these as habits of comprehension only (listening and reading), or he may go on to the more difficult habits of expression (speaking and writing). He must understand the language before he can be expected to express himself in it.

The process of understanding a new language involves several things. One is the understanding or identification of new sounds, new stress patterns, and new tone patterns. At first the immigrant will tend to take each new sound for a sound in his own language; he may hear the word *three* as *tree* if the *th* sound is unknown to him. There is also the problem of distinguishing word groupings in the new language. For example, *As is his custom, he is not here for dinner but at home*, when spoken naturally and at a normal rate, might well sound as if the first three words were identical, all pronounced with z preceded by the vowel of the unstressed *the*. And the listener will not hear the words of the sentence as separate words. He may hear them only as three or four units, *Asishiscustom he'snothere fordinner butathome*. These will be uttered at a rate of speed which makes it impossible for him to hear individual words. While he is trying thus to identify the sounds and sound groups, he must also give his attention to understanding the meaning of the utterance as a whole before the next sentence begins. Otherwise he is lost.

So it is not simply a matter of understanding individual words and then putting them all together, but of understanding groups of words and sentences as fast as they are spoken. One certainly has no time to translate into his native language, since he must remember the beginning of a sentence while listening to the end. Otherwise he is not able to make the necessary links between the different parts of the sentences, which permit him to understand the utterance as

a whole. His ability to do this will depend largely on his familiarity with the sounds, the words, and the subject matter. The understanding of a language is not as passive, therefore, as some people believe.

Speaking the new language is an even more complex activity than understanding it. Speaking includes all the above-mentioned difficulties of comprehension, as well as others. In order to speak, a person must first decide what he means and put his meaning into the structure of the new language. This involves vocabulary, grammar, phonetics, semantics, and the ability to make the right connections among these systems.

There may also be distinctions that do not exist in one's own language. For example, when a French-speaking person wishes to make a question, all he has to do is add the fixed formula *n'est-ce pas*, no matter what the form of the main part of the sentence. But when he speaks English, he has to remember which tag goes with which sentence form—*wasn't he, didn't he, won't he*—question tags which are all equivalent to *n'est-ce pas* in French. In English their use depends on the sentence form: *He was here, wasn't he? He took it, didn't he? He'll come, won't he?* In other words, the learner has to remember to use the right auxiliary in the question tag and to make it agree in person, number, and tense with the verb of the main sentence.

In places where his own language is quite regular, the non-English-speaking immigrant may find the new language quite irregular and full of exceptions. If the plural of *book* is *books*, why is the plural of *foot* not *foots*? For *foot*, and many other such words, he has to develop a separate structural habit, so that he can automatically use *feet* when the need arises. The immigrant must master these irregularities of the system as well as learn forms and relationships which are completely devoid of logic and common sense. After learning that *had* is past time, he must learn that *had better* refers to the future. After learning the collocation *run fast*, what is he to make of *stand fast*?

Then there are the words and expressions seemingly the same as those of his native language, which the newcomer may embrace as long lost friends, but which turn out to be false friends, *les faux amis* as a French lexicographer calls them. If two languages have the same word, one is immediately led to suppose that each word has the same meaning in both languages. The fact, for example, that the English *demand* and the French *demander* look so much alike and do have similar meanings, will tempt a learner to use the word in the same way in both languages, without bothering to go into the different circumstances in which it is used in each language. He may thus use the English word *demand* to convey the meaning of the French word *demander* which simply means "to ask."

While remembering to use the right words in the right places, the immigrant must also remember to use the words and structures which give the right tone—to make sure, for example, that he does

not seem angry or impolite when he wishes to appear just the opposite. There are at least half a dozen ways of asking someone to close the door, not all of which are equally polite. If the immigrant uses one which is not polite enough for the situation, he may seem angry; if he uses one which is too polite, he may appear ridiculous. In his reading he may have come across a large number of words he has never had much trouble understanding. But once he must pick one of these words for a certain situation in order to give the right impression, he may literally be at a loss for words. Was the dinner at Mrs. Smith's pleasant, exquisite, delightful, excellent, delicious, lovely, or charming? The guest must quickly choose which word to use, and he has no second choice.

The more a person has to say, the more difficult it is for him to say it in a foreign language. That is why some well-educated and well-read immigrants with a lot to say can say so little. They come to us with thousands of ideas they have acquired in their own language, but the bigger the load, the harder it is to transfer. The adult, who has a great range and variety of ideas, has more difficulty in a new language because he has more to talk about. And the more adult he is, the more he will want to modify and qualify his ideas and feelings. He requires, therefore, a knowledge and skill in the new language proportionate to the variety and complexity of what he has to say.

When a person learns to speak a new language, he must know not only which words to choose and how to put them together, but also how to pronounce them; that is, he must master the sounds and the phonetic structure of the language. Of course, he must be able to identify the new sounds before he can be expected to utter them, and we have already seen the sort of trouble that this can give. But it is not sufficient to identify them; he must be able to produce them correctly and at the right speed.

He may already be too old to imitate accurately what he hears, or he may not entirely have lost all the imitative ability which enabled him to learn his mother tongue. Nevertheless, there will always remain the fact that he already has a set of sounds and sound patterns which are second nature to him, and these will tend to get in the way when he tries to use the new set of sounds. He may even have to use his native set of sounds in order to speak the new language; indeed, he may hear no difference between them and those of the native speakers of the language. The more they resemble one another, the less he will notice the difference. A French speaker touches his teeth when he pronounces *t* and *d*, and he will generally not notice the fact that a native English speaker does not, except in very special phonetic contexts, as, for example, in the word *width*.[8]

[8] W. F. Mackey, *La Distance Interlinguistique* (Quebec: International Center for Research on Bilingualism, 1971), Chapter 4.

On the other hand, some of the new sounds may be completely unknown to the newcomer. In this case, he will tend to use a sound he feels is closest to the new sound, but this will often vary from language to language. That is why foreign speakers of English will utter the initial *th* sound in *thing* like an *s*, an *f*, or a *t*, depending on the phonetics of their native language. But if the newcomer uses one of these substitutes often enough, it will become a habit, and he will have developed what is known as a foreign accent.

Sometimes the patterns or combinations of sounds permitted in a language are even more important than the individual sounds themselves. Both German and English have the sound *g* but in German it is rarely final, so that a German speaker of English will pronounce the final English *g* as a *k*. The word *dog* will thus sound like *dock*, and *dogs* like *docks*. Many other features of pronunciation besides sounds have to be mastered. Such things as word stress, sentence stress, intonation, and rhythm are of paramount importance for intelligibility. If the newcomer wants to acquire a native accent, he will require a great deal of practice and correction. As a child he did not learn the sounds of his native language by listening to them only a few times; he had to do a lot of listening and a lot of trial-and-error speaking. We cannot expect him to learn the pronunciation of a new language without a good deal of practice in hearing, repeating, and comparing his pronunciation with that of native speakers.

Some beginners start by learning to read the new language. But reading a language is very different from speaking it, as many have found when they try to communicate in Europe with their high school French, German, or Spanish. If a word is associated with the wrong sound, as is often the case, it may subsequently be most difficult to learn the correct pronunciation. In reading English, for example, the newcomer would have no way of knowing that the words *come* and *dome* do not have the same vowel sound, and that *done* and *tone*, *does* and *toes*, though written alike, are pronounced differently. Nor has he any indication that the vowel sounds of *does* and *dumb*, though written differently, are pronounced alike.

This inconsistency between the sound of the words and the way they are spelled is felt even more keenly when the foreigner starts writing the language. His native language may be far superior to English in this respect. The Hungarian or Yugoslav, who writes his language the way it is spoken, may be understandably discouraged at the prospect of learning to write a language in which a single sound may appear in ten different ways, such as the /i/ sound, for example, in *see*, *believe*, *thief*, *people*, *machine*, *seat*, *encyclopaedia*, *quay*, *amoeba*, and *mere*. He may be further discouraged to find out that the same single letter may represent at least six different sounds—as does the *a* in *cat*, *calm*, *late*, *all*, *above*, *any*—and that the same combination of letters may stand for five different pronunciations—as does *ough* in *enough*, *dough*, *through*,

*drought, cough*—not to mention all those silent letters in such words as *walk, know, thumb,* and *psalm.*

There are other differences in languages that are even more profound because they concern the very essence of our experience, the things and substances of the world, the feelings and sensations of the mind. That is what I was referring to when speaking of the nature of language. And because of this, a new language is difficult in still another way—the concept of time. To a German or French immigrant the idea of a present continuous tense may be quite strange. His language has not conditioned him for any such distinction between present time, habitual time, and continuous time. The English tense system seems more complicated than his own. Other languages, however, through dozens of tenses, moods, voices, and modalities, may treat time in a much more detailed fashion than English does.

We must not brush aside such differences as mere grammatical peculiarities. They go much deeper than grammar, affecting the very patterns of thought. One might imagine, for example, that all people see white as white and black as black, but such is by no means the case. As we saw at the start, all languages do not have the same number of colors. Some languages have words for only three colors, some for only two. There are even languages which, instead of colors, distinguish a number of shades, graduating from light to dark.

What is true of color is also true of other phenomena, of objects, feelings, and ideas. I have already referred to differences in the concept of snow, determined by which part of the globe we inhabit. Similarly, English has only one word for water; some Amerindian languages have two or more. We have only one word for camel; some of the dialects of Arabic have more than a dozen. Language is a reflection of the culture.

Thus it appears that languages may classify nature in different ways and in different compartments, that different languages define experience in different ways, and that a language shapes the ideas of those who speak it, forcing them to view the world differently from those who speak other languages. The problem of the immigrant's adjustment to his new environment is therefore quite profound. It is not only a matter of language differences but also of cultural attitudes and patterns of thought. Yet it is only through language that the immigrant can fully understand his new country. It has long been recognized that language is the key to a person's successful adjustment to a new country. Although some do manage to learn a new language with amazing speed, others, for reasons suggested here, have found it very difficult. Yet non-English-speaking immigrants may have the most to contribute to their new community. That is why language instruction is of the utmost importance to the immigrant, and why he needs the best possible facilities, including the services of the most highly skilled teachers.

## The Nature of Language and of Language Learning

Albert H. Marckwardt

Language is the fabric of our thinking, the vehicle of our social existence. Because of this very fact, we are prone to overlook some of the most salient features of its structure. We rarely give any thought to the development of our own ability to use it or to the processes involved in whatever degree of mastery we may have achieved over it. In this instance, familiarity does not necessarily breed contempt, but it does make for unawareness, and this is equally true of many facets of our behavior. Most of us tie a pair of shoelaces at least once a day, but we would have some difficulty in describing in detail this wholly familiar yet fairly complex act.

I shall begin, therefore, by reminding you of some of the characteristics of your own language which you have either forgotten or may never have considered with any degree of care, but which may have considerably more than an indirect or theoretical bearing upon what you, as teachers, do in the classroom. In many instances this very unawareness can easily result in inefficient or misdirected teaching procedures.

Language is pervasive. As I have already indicated, this is true of language in general, in terms of its relevance to our behavior as human beings cooperating in a social order. It is specifically true of the English language, in terms of its place in the world today and with respect to our employment of it.

There are, spread over four continents of the globe, some 275 million speakers of English as a first or native language. It is not the first of the languages of the world in terms of numbers of speakers, but no other language equals it in global spread. This accounts for certain kinds of diversity in the language, set within an extraordinary degree of linguistic unity.

It has been estimated that each one of us on the average speaks about fifty thousand words per week, roughly the amount contained in a short novel. If one multiplies this by the number of speakers already cited, he arrives at the staggering total of 13.75 trillion words spoken weekly, some eighty billion spoken every hour, well over a billion spoken every minute. Aside from the sheer magnitude of the

figures, this explains why any research into one aspect or another of the English language must necessarily rely upon a sampling method rather than an examination of the entire corpus, and why any sample can, at best, be only an infinitesimal portion of the whole. It also explains why no grammar of English even approaches a complete description or account of the language.

Basically, language is something that we speak. It is somewhat less fashionable to say this today than it was twenty-five years ago; nevertheless so many of us are still geared to think of language as the written word that it is helpful to remind ourselves from time to time of the importance of speech. As individuals we speak and understand language in its oral form some years before we even begin to read and write. Historically, man spoke for centuries, even millenia, before writing systems were developed. In terms of sheer quantity, most of us speak much more than we write. There have been, and there are now, many of the thirty-five hundred or so languages that we know about which are spoken but for which no writing system has ever been developed. There is no known instance of a language which is written but which was never spoken.

What this means is that the writing system is secondary, not in importance, but generically. Moreover, the writing system of English at least fails to report or reports imperfectly certain features of the language itself. In contrast to the writing system of Spanish, it has virtually no provision for indicating the placement of word stress. Thus the writing of such words as *insult* or *intimate* is ambiguous, failing to distinguish between ***insult***, noun, and ***insult***, verb, or between ***intimate***, adjective, and ***intimate***, verb. This is not fatal, of course, since the context usually reveals the function, but neither is it precise, and the spoken language does make the distinction. Whereas the writing system clearly signals the morphophonemic variation between *a* and *an*, our indefinite article, it fails to report the comparable distinction which most of us make in the definite article, as in *the books* [ðə buks] as compared with *the oats* [ði ots]. True enough, it is possible that many of us have protested too much over these and many other shortcomings of the English writing system and have failed to be sufficiently appreciative of its virtues—and there are some—yet classroom teachers need to sharpen their awareness of the complex relationships between the two, and in particular they must avoid the notion, which has prevailed far too long, that speech is a somewhat inaccurate and slovenly realization of the written language.

Language has pattern, just as much of our nonlinguistic behavior has. This is often uttered as a truism but without a clear notion of what language patterns consist of, or what the term *pattern* actually means when it is used in this connection.

For one thing, pattern may consist of items recurring in a set sequence. Just as in a dinner menu, soup precedes the entree and

dessert follows it, or in a church service the invocation, the reading, the sermon, and the benediction have their places as items in a set series, so we order the words in our phrases and clauses. In declarative statements we are committed to a subject-verb-object order. This is pattern, and departures from it may result in miscomprehension; we have made much of the difference between *man bites dog* and *dog bites man*. But there are many linguistic sequences to be considered in addition to the basic clause pattern. Scarcely any native speaker of English would hesitate for a moment over the ordering of the modifiers in such sequences as "our many sweet young girl students" and "the seven dirty old garbage men."

It is apparent, nevertheless, that these items follow a set order, one which, moreover, must be made specific to any foreign learner of English but which is part of the built-in grammar of those who speak the language natively. Likewise, the ordering of adverbial modifiers in such sentences as "He leaves here early" and "He waited there anxiously for a long time" illustrates precisely the same principle.

Symmetry, another important aspect of pattern, is particularly apparent in the phonological structure of English. This can be observed in the three points of articulation for the voiceless stops, the voiced stops, and the nasals; namely bilabial, alveolar, and palatal/velar, as indicated in the following diagram:

| bilabial | alveolar | velar |
|---|---|---|
| p | t | k |
| b | d | g |
| m | n | ŋ |

In this connection it is worth pointing out also that, except for one brief period in the history of the language, English front vowels have always been unrounded and the back vowels have been produced with lip rounding. The morphophonemic variations in the plural and genitive singular of nouns, the third person singular, present indicative of verbs, and the regular past tense inflection of verbs observe the same kind of adjustment to the preceding consonant, even though different inflectional endings are involved:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| cats [s] | dogs [z] | places [əz] |
| works [s] | plays [z] | pleases [əz] |
| worked [t] | dragged [d] | waited [əd] |

In short, if language did not display patterned organization, we should be able to master it only through the rote learning of thousands of individual items, manifestly an impossible task. It has been pointed out in this connection that such childish formations as *foots* for *feet*

and *goed* for *went*, errors though they may be, also constitute striking testimony that the inflectional pattern has clearly been learned and that the only failure here is one of not having become familiar with certain obviously deviant forms.

This leads us to the next observation of importance for the teacher, namely, that few patterns are carried through with absolute consistency. The standard English reflexive pronoun paradigm illustrates this particularly well. The forms of the first two persons, *myself, thyself, yourself, ourselves, yourselves,* all consist of the genitive form of the pronoun followed by *-self,* the second element being inflected according to the noun pattern for the plural when the antecedent is plural. In the third person, however, *himself* and *themselves* combine the object form of the pronoun with *-self,* whereas *herself* and *itself* are indeterminate. It is of at least passing interest to observe that in many forms of nonstandard English, the genitive plus *-self* pattern is maintained consistently throughout the entire declension, giving rise to such forms as *hisself* and *theirself.*

We must also concede that, despite apparent similarity in the ordering of items, there may be underlying differences in structure. On the surface there would seem to be identity of pattern in such sequences as "John is difficult to help" and "John is anxious to help," yet it must be recognized that whereas the first of these is capable of the transformation, "It is difficult to help John," the second is not. This leads to the inevitable conclusion that differences in underlying relationships may be concealed by superficial similarities in the external or surface structure. It is precisely here that the transformational grammarians have made a significant contribution to our understanding of the way in which the language functions.

There are many other aspects of language, such as the dependence of meaning upon context and upon the totality of experience of both speaker and hearer or writer and reader, which the teacher must keep in mind. I have chosen to concentrate upon pattern since this is at once so automatic, so unconscious, and so easily overlooked.

Of equal importance is the awareness that the English language is a medium of extraordinary variety, much more so than is often realized, simply because the experience of any one individual with it is such an infinitesimal part of the whole. First of all, English is the native and official language of not one or two but a number of powerful and thriving nations: Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, and South Africa, as well as the United Kingdom and the United States. In each of these the lexicon has developed in a somewhat different fashion, the norms of acceptable linguistic behavior focus upon different features of the language, and the patterns of change over the years have taken somewhat different directions.

Within each of these national forms of the language there are regional variants and social dialects as well, each with widely differing

degrees of acceptability. Beyond this there are levels of style or formality which cut across the distinction between the spoken and the written language in a number of ways. Perhaps the best analysis of the stylistic modes of American English is to be found in *The Five Clocks* by Martin Joos, in which the following five styles are recognized and described, at least in some detail: intimate, casual, consultative, formal, and frozen. It must be realized that for all intents and purposes, the essential difference between "This is the man whom we are seeking," "This is the man we're looking for," and "He's our man," to cite comparable forms for only three of them, is not in structural or grammatical acceptability but rather in their different manner of adjustment to the communications situation. There is always a danger of confusing informality with ungrammaticality, and much of our thinking on these points is muddy and confused.

This rapid sketch has attempted to show that language is a medium or form of actual and potential human behavior which is characterized by an extraordinary degree of complexity. From time immemorial men have sought to understand and codify it. To the extent that these attempts have constituted a systematic approach, and there have been several, we are justified in speaking of the scientific study of language—or linguistics, the term usually given to this endeavor.

In any systematic study, science, or discipline, the underlying assumptions must be recognized and stated. Just as the indestructability of matter is a governing principle in physics, so also linguistics has its underlying assumption: the conviction that the spoken language reflects the underlying structure most directly, or the recognition that languages have a deep as well as a surface structure. As with any other science, properly valid methods of collecting data and of classifying them must be devised. In these, nonrepresentativeness, circularity, and other logical pitfalls must be avoided. Techniques of presentation, both verbal and graphic, must also be worked out, making use of devices ranging all the way from special alphabets to Chinese boxes and tree diagrams. This is a very brief sketch of the scientific basis of the study of language, but it is important to recognize that it does proceed upon a foundation of logic and principle and that its conclusions must be viewed in the light of those principles.

As English teachers our concern is with the teaching of language, but there is little point in discussing teaching except in the light of the way the individual learns or acquires his language, the ways in which control of the language grows and develops in all of us. Here we must take into consideration the out-of-school as well as the classroom contacts and experiences with the language. In short, how does any one of us acquire a command of this complex medium?

A complete answer to this question is beyond the realm of possibility, but it will be worthwhile to review some of the things that we do know and are occasionally likely to overlook. First of all we must recognize

that the child entering school has already achieved a considerable mastery of his native language. Except for a few minor points of difficulty, he controls the phonology and is familiar with the regular inflectional patterns. Even the errors he makes, such as *mouses* for *mice*, or *goed* for *went*, the consequence of extending the regular patterns to a few historical anomalies, are evidence of his grasp of the system. He knows the ordering of sentence elements and has a vocabulary of some five or six thousand words. His receptive knowledge of the language is even more extensive. To consider him linguistically a *tabula rasa* is a denial of everything we know about the development of language in children.

For most children this preschool linguistic achievement is wholly oral. They generally acquire a command of the writing system—learning to read, spell, and write—as part of their early school experience, but we should not make the mistake of confusing the learning of reading, spelling, and writing with the acquisition of language. Most children are well into the third grade before their command of the writing system, that is, their ability to read or to compose in writing, is on an equal level with their mastery of the spoken language. Only after that point can reading serve as a means of extending and enhancing the child's linguistic experience.

We must also recognize that English, or the language arts, is unique among the school subjects in that the classroom experience constitutes only a small fraction of the child's total linguistic activity. It is true that in the early grades about 50 percent of the school day is spent in language instruction of one kind or another. But at most this cannot amount to more than three hours out of a twelve-hour waking day, during which the child is using and is exposed to language constantly. As time goes on, instruction in English may occupy no more than forty-five minutes of a fifteen-hour waking day, less than 5 percent. Very often it is only during this short period that the child is in contact with standard English. The language of the home, the street, and the playground may be of quite another variety, if indeed it is English at all. Naturally this sets a limit on what can be accomplished with respect to language instruction in the schools.

In addition we must take a natural growth factor into account. Even if there were no language instruction in the schools at all, there would undoubtedly be some development and maturation in the child's command of the linguistic medium, at least up to adolescence and possibly up to early adulthood. One of the challenges here is to make the school instruction reinforce the natural growth process. Here, perhaps, the distinction between linguistic capability or competence on the one hand and performance on the other is of major importance.

Another significant distinction is that between the acquisition of a dialect which is not native to the learner and the expansion of competence in the dialect which is native to him. There are many

more children in this country, especially in the urban centers but not exclusively so, who fall into the first category rather than the second, but there are literally millions in each of them. It would seem obvious that the same instructional patterns and techniques will not serve both groups effectively, although for years many teachers have deluded themselves with the thought that they might.

The speakers of the nonstandard forms of the language present us with another problem. Over the past few years we have generally agreed that it is educationally unsound, if not absolutely harmful, to attempt to obliterate the child's native dialect and to replace it with standard English. We have, so to speak, settled for a functional bidialectalism, teaching the young speaker to use the standard language in situations where it is demanded and leaving him with a sufficient regard for his native dialect that he will not hesitate to employ it in appropriate circumstances. But recently this attitude has come under attack by those who insist that in a pluralistic society, the child's language should not be tampered with at all. It is fair to ask, however, whether dialect switching is essentially different from the style shifting characteristic of most of us as we go from a formal to a casual situation. This issue is not yet resolved; it demands thorough, rigorous, and particularly unemotional examination.

The matters which have been discussed here are factors in normal linguistic development and must be taken into consideration in any formulation of teaching aims and objectives. But once we have clarified or settled the aims to our satisfaction and have recognized the developmental factors with their attendant limitations upon what we can and cannot do, there still remains the problem of devising teaching techniques and procedures. How do we go about doing what we can?

It should be clear at the outset that the different levels upon which English teachers operate call for different kinds of treatment, and here I speak not of grade levels but of levels of linguistic sophistication. At the most elementary stratum there are such matters as noun-verb agreement, appropriate tense forms for verbs, irregular plural forms of nouns, lexical confusions of the *accept-except* and *compose-comprise* types, frequent misspellings, and the lack of any concepts of the minimal (and maximal) requirements of a clause or sentence. For the most part, students falling into this category will have a language background other than standard English.

At a second level the problems are chiefly structural, in a syntactic and rhetorical sense. Modifiers are often misplaced, verb tenses are not in logical sequence, and there is little or no variation in sentence structure. The writing reveals little sense of what constitutes a paragraph and even less of how sentences within a paragraph may be arranged in an effective sequence.

I can best illustrate what I recognize as a third level by quoting a passage from a letter I received not long ago from a corporation

executive who had been present at a talk I gave on communication problems in industry. "I appreciate your sharing your expertise with us in the recent conference," the writer began. He then went on, "I wish to propagate these concepts and information among our management personnel. To help me reinforce my memory, I would appreciate receiving a copy of your presentation." Here the forms are unexceptionable, and the structure is tight. But the style is cliché-ridden bureaucratese at its worst. It is an excellent example of what the British find to criticize in American writing.

Each of the levels I have tried to isolate requires a quite different type of treatment. Ideally all three should be dealt with in terms of a linguistic sophistication and a due regard for those principles of language acquisition which can be put to a remedial use. In doing so, however, we must be careful to distinguish between language experience and language analysis. After all, a large share of our linguistic performance is an unconscious operation. Very few of us can give a coherent account of even the most obvious facets of our individual linguistic development.

Certainly it is difficult to assume that the language-learning process operates deductively or that we move consciously in applying so-called rules to the individual linguistic performance. It is hard to imagine a six-year-old Roman child in Julius Caesar's time producing a sentence by mentally reviewing a noun paradigm, a verb conjugation, and a rule of syntax to determine the forms of the verb and noun he was about to use in a sentence. Yet such a concept of linguistic process underlies what has been going on in Latin classes for a period of a thousand years or more. It is a point of view and a pedagogical approach long associated with traditional grammar.

On the other hand we have recently come to question how much of the language-learning process is inductive and dependent upon habit formation. For a time we thought that it was and reasoned that the habit formation might be reinforced by drill on inflectional forms and practice in word-order patterns. True enough, drill can upon occasion serve as a corrective measure, although even here it has its limitations, but we must ask whether it makes for growth in language competence. At any rate, this approach and point of view was associated with the structural linguists, who often failed to make the useful distinction between pattern fixation and pattern extension.

Unfortunately the generative-transformational grammarians have given us no clear outline upon which to proceed. On the one hand their assumption of innate language ability seems somewhat shrouded in mysticism, and on the other, they have been unclear on the issue of whether the transformations which play such a large role in their language descriptions are psychological processes or logical abstractions.

We must return, then, to the broad question of how much formal language instruction can do, given our present pattern of classroom

organization and procedure. Even if the conditions under which we work were to be greatly improved, it is scarcely likely that we would make a finished prose stylist of every one of our children. The most we can hope for is to furnish each of our students with a guided linguistic experience which will bring his performance closer to the level of his language competence than we have hitherto succeeded in doing.

In the past we have without question raised the general level of literacy, but this is probably the most that we can claim for ourselves. Certainly we have brought relatively few to the point of distinction in their use of the language. There is little American writing or public speaking which stands out for its quality of ease and charm as well as intellectual content. Actually, many of our classroom efforts, by concentrating so relentlessly upon the negative—that is, what not to say or write—have undermined the confidence of vast numbers in their ability to command the language. The belief that one's "grammar" needs improvement is almost universally held in this country, even by those with impeccable educational credentials.

There is no one royal road to improvement in language training—the sheer complexity of the situation precludes that. Nor does any linguist have all the answers to the questions that have been raised. Linguists can be most useful, perhaps, in pointing out what not to do, namely, those things which are in direct contradiction to the facts of language usage, structure, and acquisition as they know them. Certainly they can point out the nonsense in our textbooks and reinforce our demand for greater accuracy and ingenuity in dealing with the English language. It is clear that success does not lie in inhibiting or hopelessly complicating expression. What we must strive for is to give every student a breadth and variety of language experience, guided as understandingly as possible, and tempered by a sense of realism, but carefully planned in such a way that each new experience with the language will build upon that which has preceded it.

# 2 CRITICAL ISSUES IN TEACHING ESL AND ESD

## Bilingualism and Bidialectalism

Robert J. Di Pietro

One of man's most valuable possessions is his language. Through it he communicates with his fellow humans about affairs essential to his very being. Language is man's key to membership in his community. It is a tool he continually adjusts to fit the tasks that challenge him. Not only does language serve man's utilitarian purposes, but it also provides him with one of his greatest sources of pleasure. Granted that some men are more gifted than others in the use of language, all are capable of enjoying its artistic use in songs, novels, plays, and poetry. The pleasure man derives from his language is evident even in early childhood—the very young can be observed to make sounds of all sorts and to lull themselves to sleep with the assurances of their own soliloquies. So much is language a part of our existence that to be deprived of it, as in aphasia, is an affliction equal to if not worse than any physical confinement. Indeed, the very balance of our daily life depends on the availability of a language we can use to interact with others in our community.

That balance is disturbed when groups of people find themselves in situations where recourse to a common language is either impossible or difficult. Since the structure of a community depends critically on communication, the inaccessibility to some individuals of one of the codes of communication deprives them of community membership. When the number of such individuals grows sufficiently large, intergroup strife is likely to develop. There are seemingly only two ways to correct the resultant imbalances. Either the two groups restructure themselves and merge to form a new community or they take measures to reassert the distinctness of each of their original communities. If they decide to remain distinct, they need not move from the same or proximal geographical location, and they may even learn to share some community functions in a kind of societal symbiosis. There are, in fact, many such situations in the world today. Many so-called "bilingual nations" are little more than different language communities located within the same political boundaries and forced to share some of the same national interests.

In those cases where genuinely bilingual communities arise, a relative stability of language use is achieved; that is, intergroup differences diminish and each language becomes associated with separate functions in the society. In this way, one language may develop as the tool for commercial transactions while the other takes over the role of instruction or religious training. In addition, a creolized variety may appear as the result of contact between the two original languages and come to be used in informal situations. It is not unusual to find each language involved in bilingual communities becoming associated with distinct levels of style all the way from informal family discussions to highly formalized university lectures. Relatively stable bilingual communities can be found in Paraguay, India, and in some parts of Africa,[1] to name but a few. As a result, we can say that the predominant feature of stable bilingualism is the use of each language by most if not all members of the community for different purposes. Separatism disappears and a social balance not unlike that of monolingual communities is achieved.

Unfortunately, bilingualism is not always stable. Oftentimes societal factors are such that no agreement can be reached as to the roles each language should play. The differences between the social structures of the groups in contact may be so great that they can find little in common to share. One group may be materially wealthier and force members of the less fortunate groups to abandon their language as well as their cultural values in order to share the wealth. In addition to language and cultural prejudices, there may be racial ones which make integration as one community difficult. The result is that bilingual individuals develop only in those areas where the linguistically distinct groups must come into contact. These individuals find themselves playing the role of translators for their monolingual relatives and associates.

Such has been the case both with the majority of immigrant groups in the United States and with the indigenous communities which have fallen in the path of our national expansion. Few or no positive values are left to the native languages of such groups once their members decide to climb to economically and socially advantageous positions controlled by the English-speaking majority. Despite all efforts to keep a native language alive in the home, the pressures of English are usually so great that the socially mobile individual must eventually abandon it. Conversely, the monolingual speaker of English is not in the least constrained to abandon his language. Although we in the United States may express great interest in other languages, our record of achievement

[1] See, respectively, Joan Rubin, *National Bilingualism in Paraguay* (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1969); John J. Gumperz, "Communication in Multilingual Societies," in *Cognitive Anthropology*, ed. S. A. Tyler (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), pp. 435–49; and B. W. Andrzejewski, "Speech and Writing Dichotomy as the Pattern of Multilingualism in the Somali Republic," *The Symposium on Multilingualism*, Publication no. 87 (Brazzaville: The Scientific Council for Africa, 1962), pp. 177–81.

in learning foreign languages reveals the little practical value we see in them. As John Carroll reported in 1967, the average language major near graduation in American colleges achieved nothing more than a "limited working proficiency" or a plus two on the five-point rating scale of the U.S. State Department.[2]

Our report card carries other bad marks. In the recent efforts of Spanish-speaking Texans to persuade administrators to have school instruction in Spanish, it came to light that the students were strictly forbidden to speak Spanish on school grounds under the threat of beatings and other sanctions.[3] One can only marvel that in spite of such pressures there are still millions of Americans using their native language—German, Italian, Spanish, Polish—and thousands of American Indians speaking their tribal languages. Of course the price for this individualism has been high. The monolingual speaker of a language other than English is often trapped at the bottom of the economy. If he is rural, he finds himself lost in the city. If he is urban, he is deprived of joining in the mass exodus to the suburbs. Because his culture counts for little in the eyes of the majority, he is said to be culturally disadvantaged. Even if he tries to find positive values in his restricted environment, the dominant culture destroys those values by imposing its own set. Langston Hughes sums it up eloquently with the following definition of misery: "Misery is when you heard on the radio that the neighborhood you live in is a slum but you always thought it was home."[4]

Up to this point, I have discussed only the phenomenon of bilingualism and have said nothing about what has been called "bidialectalism." In accordance with the notion of "stigmatized speech," we can define bidialectal individuals as those who possess both a socially stigmatized and a prestige variety of the same language.[5] This definition hinges, of course, upon how well we clarify the notion of language. A variety of speech is recognized as a language for any number of different reasons, including codification with a set of normative rules, association with a national state, and possession of a standardized writing system and a body of literature. Dialects may "grow" into languages through various combinations of such features. By calling speech varieties "dialects," we imply that they are restricted geographically, socially, or in both ways, while at the same time linked together in a chain of mutual intelligibility. To understand how some dialects become socially stigmatized, we must keep in mind that it is usually the higher social

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[2] John B. Carroll, "Foreign Language Proficiency Levels Attained by Language Majors Near Graduation from College," *Foreign Language Annals* 1 (December 1967): 131–51.

[3] Leroy F. Aarons, "The Chicanos Want In," *Washington Post*, 11 January 1970.

[4] Langston Hughes, *Black Misery* (New York: Paul S. Eriksson, 1969).

[5] For a clear discussion of social stigma, see Ervin Goffman, *Stigma* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964).

or economic class which stigmatizes the speech of inferior social classes. Thus, we speak about "ghetto English" but not about "suburban English." The word *black* functions in social stigmatization, while the word *white* does not. Ossie Davis, writing in the *IRCD Bulletin*, reports that Roget's *Thesaurus of the English Language* lists 120 synonyms for the word blackness, of which sixty are distinctly unfavorable and twenty are related directly to race.[6] Slogans such as "Black is beautiful," which are becoming more evident throughout our country, represent an effort to remove some of the social stigma.

It appears that both bidialectalism and bilingualism, as they are found in the United States, are mainly of the transitional type. Both phenomena seem to be marked with some degree of strife or social tension. The resolution of the social imbalances accompanying both situations, however, will probably not be the same. If we succeed in deemphasizing racial distinctions as factors determining economic and social standing, the need to speak of "black English" will disappear. In fact, even today the term "ghetto English" might be more appropriate in view of the growing numbers of black Americans who are monodialectal in a prestige form of English. The lack of attachment to "black English" by black Americans is clearly illustrated by the reaction of William Raspberry, a columnist for the *Washington Post*, to the work of Roger Shuy, director of the Urban Language Study Program of the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington. Raspberry interpreted Shuy's proposal to use ghetto English as a base from which to teach black children as an attempt to "institutionalize the very inequities . . . that a democratic society and a democratic education should attempt to neutralize."[7] When Shuy denied any intention on his part to raise the ghetto dialect to an institutional level, Raspberry responded that "some of the linguists, having discovered the consistencies and subtleties of ghetto language, may be overemphasizing the 'where he (i.e., the ghetto child) is' at the expense of 'where he needs to go.' "[8] How different this reaction is from that of many poor Spanish-speaking Texans who, while wanting to better themselves economically, have no desire to give up their way of talking for a prestige variety of English. At the very least, it is apparent that linguists working with socially stigmatized dialects will have to keep in mind that the subjects of their study are not in the enviable position of being detached from whatever labels are used, nor do they ascribe any socially positive values to their home speech. Furthermore, the teacher should be wary of claims that the methods of teaching foreign languages can be applied directly to the problem of imparting a prestige dialect of English to speakers of a

[6] Ossie Davis, "The English Language Is My Enemy," *IRCD Bulletin* 5 (Summer 1969): 13–15.

[7] William Raspberry, *Washington Post*, 23 November 1969.

[8] Ibid., 5 December 1969.

socially stigmatized dialect. Much more research is needed, not only on social stratification, but also on the relevance of pattern practice, substitution drills, and all of the other teaching devices to the acquisition of nonstigmatized dialects.

There are reasons to believe that the fate of Spanish-English bilingualism will be different from that of other combinations in the United States. Unlike German, Italian, Polish, and other European languages in this country, Spanish profits from continuing socioeconomic support in the eyes of many Americans. The dominant English-speaking community can look beyond the millions of poverty-stricken people who speak Spanish in the ghettos of our large cities and in the rural areas of the Southwest and reflect, instead, upon the potential of Spanish in foreign commerce and relations. Central and South America are vast markets for American goods and a man who is bilingual in Spanish and English can, if he is resourceful, put his language skills to good use in a business career. You may not agree with it, but this argument is one that is likely to occur to those English-speaking Americans who insist that foreign language training be made "relevant."[9]

Awareness of an ethnicity extending beyond the physical limitations of their own poverty-stricken existence is only one of the elements that support the Hispano-American's positive attitudes about his language. A feeling of "having been there first" can be found among Spanish-speaking persons living in the southwestern part of our nation. As far as city living goes, the Spanish-speaking citizen can preserve his ties with Puerto Rico, which is officially under the American flag, yet uses Spanish as the predominant language of education. Since the speaker of Spanish in the United States need not suffer the total break with his home culture that characterizes the immigrant European, Spanish-English bilingualism is not likely to be as transitory as that involving other languages with English. Above all, it is not to be lumped together with a "bidialectalism" which contrasts prestigious with socially stigmatized varieties of the same language.

Having demonstrated that bilingualism and bidialectalism as found in the United States are more distinct than they are alike, we turn to the question of education. Although the actual procedures are far from perfected, the goals are more clearly in sight for educating the ghetto English speaker than for educating the bilingual child. Certainly no one wishes to be educated in a socially stigmatized dialect. The decision that the curriculum should be programed to produce students educated in prestigious English is an important first step in interpreting the data gathered from the field worker in the ghetto. While great

[9]The "practical" value of Spanish may be the major factor in the rapid gains that Spanish enrollments have made in American colleges and universities. See Julia G. Kant, "Foreign Language Registrations in Institutions of Higher Education, Fall 1968," *Foreign Language Annals* 3 (December 1969): 247–304.

emphasis is presently being placed on the phonological and grammatical aspects of ghetto speech, attention will probably soon turn to experiential or semantic matters. I have reached this conclusion for several reasons. The world of a child is unique, regardless of where he lives. Each of his experiences helps him to build his own interpretations of the meaningful elements around him. While the child can be trained in many ways, he cannot be truly educated until the new things he learns can be related to what he has already experienced. In view of student unrest everywhere, our methods seem to have generally failed in this respect. The ghetto situation simply brings it into sharper focus. Because appropriate materials and techniques are absent, some teachers have turned to letting the students speak freely of their own experiences, with sometimes remarkable results.[10] The following poem is by Nell Moore, a fourteen-year-old ghetto child who has found the words to express the despair resulting from neglect:

**Who Looks**

Beneath the sidewalks
to tunnels—
merging
separating—
searching out the
earthy blackness;
Behind the neons
proving
camouflage
for purple-veined faces;
Past the faces—
hiding
selves.[11]

Although children like the writer of this poem have been called nonvocal, I suspect that their incommunicativeness results instead from not having been allowed to identify with the formal values of our school systems. Having the child discuss something that is real to him is not only a good way to start the educational process, but is also a valuable source of information for the teacher. The insights obtainable about the child's experiences will help to shape the subject matter of the curriculum so that it effectively relates new concepts and experiences to the ones which the child has already had. We must remember that the data compiled by linguists, psychologists, and sociologists will not automatically apply themselves to the instruction of children from

[10] Educationalists may see in this approach the implications of Montessori methods.

[11] From the collection entitled *The Me Nobody Knows*, ed. Stephen M. Joseph (New York: Avon Books, 1969), p. 82. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

"disadvantaged" backgrounds. The teacher must bring his own professional skill and common sense to the task of translating field research into sound pedagogy. It may even turn out that a well-prepared curriculum aimed at ghetto children will be relevant to the "advantaged" child as well. Aside from the obvious need for phonological and grammatical drills addressed specifically to the ghetto child, the coverage of semantic and cultural elements could be broad enough to incorporate many experiential backgrounds. Just as the ghetto child needs to learn about the life patterns of others, so should the advantaged child come to understand that his is not the only way of life. Perhaps the best text is the one that organizes information about all life styles found in the United States, therefore providing a broader basis for the tolerance of others.

Teaching in the bilingual situation is complicated by conditions not present in the case of bidialectalism. Because of the factors discussed earlier in this paper, one cannot always identify one language as socially stigmatized and the other as prestigious in the same way that dialects of the same language might be labeled. The result is a general disagreement about the accepted goals of education involving two languages. In a nutshell, one could say that "bilingual education" is not the same as "education of the bilingual."[12] The implication of the former is that the student should emerge from school with an education acquired in more than one language. To attain this goal, decisions must be made regarding (1) which subjects should be taught in which language, (2) whether the same subject should be taught in more than one language, (3) how each language should be taught as a subject in itself, (4) how the student's progress in each language should be tested, (5) what requirements the teacher should have, (6) how relevant to the student's needs the overall education will be, and many more such problems.

In the latter case, i.e., educating the bilingual, the authorities may conclude that an education in only one of the languages should be the desired goal. Without recommending that such programs are to be adopted, one can see that a decision of this sort simplifies the matter considerably. One of the languages comes to be marked as "subordinate" and is used only as the point of departure in order to build a competence

[12] A. Bruce Gaarder, "Organization of the Bilingual School," *Journal of Social Issues* 23 (April 1967): 110–20. Gaarder characterizes bilingual schools as being either "one-way" or "two-way." In the former, one group of students is instructed in two languages. In the latter, there are two groups, each studying in both its own and the other language. In both cases, instruction time may be either equally or unequally distributed between the two languages. Most bilingual schools do not give equal time and treatment to both languages. The Coral Way Elementary School (Miami, Florida) is given as an example of a two-way bilingual school in the United States. Robert D. Wilson, in "Bilingual Education for Navajo Students," *TESOL Quarterly* 3 (March 1969): 65–69, describes another two-way school which has been established for Navajo-speaking children.

in the other one. Both languages may be used as the medium of instruction, but the curriculum is phased so that "critical" subjects are taught only in the dominant language. Furthermore, the use of the dominant language becomes more frequent in the upper levels. Although contrastive studies might be made of the languages and cultures involved, only the dominant one serves as the "target" of instruction.

Whatever decision is reached about bilingualism in education, the pertinent societal factors must be considered carefully from many points of view. At the present stage, the only obvious thing is that one pattern of either bilingual education or of the education of bilinguals is not possible for the entire nation. Each situation has its own combination of needs and natural resources so that procedures effective in one community might fail miserably in another. In this connection, I would like to insert one more thought. According to Joshua Fishman, a community that achieves a stage in which everyone can talk equally as well about everything in both languages will revert to a stage of monolingualism because no community needs two languages to discuss the same things.[15] If Fishman is correct, one had better demonstrate that each language in a bilingual situation serves a definite purpose—before embarking on a program of bilingual education.

I am sorry that I have no ready solutions to the problems of bilingual and bidialectal education. My remarks about the distinctions between bidialectalism and the various types of bilingualism are offered in the hope that they will help you decide what must be done in your particular case. The bilingual schools already in operation will have to be watched in order to see how successful they are in achieving the goals they set for themselves. Whatever decision is reached, a good start will have been made when children are no longer punished in school for speaking a language other than English.

[15] Joshua A. Fishman, "Sociological Perspective on the Study of Bilingualism," *Linguistics* 39 (May 1968): 21–49.

## Teaching Standard English as a Second Language or Dialect: The Unanswered Questions, the Successes, and the Promise

James E. Alatis

The first people on this continent to be taught English as a second language were probably the American Indians. If this is so, we may note an ironic coincidence, for present-day teaching of English as a second or foreign language has profited much from linguistic science, a twentieth-century outgrowth of the study of American Indian languages. The wheel seems to have come full circle, for one of the important concerns of the profession today is the teaching of English to American Indian children in the United States. This in itself is interesting in that previously in this country, English as a second language was taught primarily to adult, university-level foreign students. As Professor William Moulton has pointed out, two things have distinguished the teaching of English as a second language in the United States: first, in its early development, it involved only small numbers of foreign students; and second, from the very start, it was largely under the direction of trained linguists.[1] Indeed, anyone who attempts to trace the development of English as a second language in the United States must begin with the relationship between linguistics and language teaching.

Briefly stated, modern linguistic science has helped English and foreign-language teaching through the scientific analysis of the language to be taught. This includes the analysis of the system of mutually contrasting basic sounds ("phonemes") and the conditions under which they appear, as well as the analysis of the grammar, stated not in traditional terms of Western philosophy, but in terms of the system of form classes, inflections, constructions, sentence types, and actually functioning "rules" as determined by analysis of utterances. The study of the contrasts between the learner's mother tongue and the language being learned is another major contribution of linguistics to language teaching. It should be pointed out here that this notion of contrastive analysis, rather than small classes, oral drill and repetition, intensity of instruction, or the use of audiovisual aids, is the most important

[1] William G. Moulton, "Linguistics and Language Teaching in the United States, 1940–1960," *Trends in European and American Linguistics, 1930–1960*, ed. C. Mohrmann et al. (Utrecht, Netherlands: Spectrum Publishers, 1961), p. 102.

distinguishing feature of the so-called "oral approach" which was advocated by Charles Fries. Further, Professor Fries and those who followed him insisted on the importance of a similar contrastive analysis of the target and source cultures as well. The linguists' study of the physiology of sound production and their observations about the nature of language itself, which characteristically exists as a system of spoken communication and only derivatively as a system of written communication, further illustrate the interrelationship between linguistics and the teaching of ESL.

I should like to add yet another distinguishing characteristic of teaching English as a second language to those that Professor Moulton has suggested: from the very beginning there has been a dearth of qualified personnel in the field. When the National Defense Education Act of 1958 was passed, many of us felt that the long-range solution to this manpower problem might come from a revision of that act so that its provisions would apply to the teaching of English as a second language. For the foreign languages, funds had been made available for research, institutes, language and area centers, and graduate fellowships. Unfortunately, despite the close affinity of methodology in all second language learning, the provisions of the NDEA did not apply to the teaching of English as a second language.

But we must remember that the NDEA was a *domestic* program, designed to improve foreign language instruction in the U.S.—in American schools, colleges, and universities. The pendulum of governmental activities seemed to have swung entirely in the opposite direction. The problem of teaching English as a second language, which had been so critical abroad and which primarily concerned *international educational* programs and *foreign* students, came home to roost again—and with a vengeance. The wheel had indeed come full circle: we started with the American Indians and have come back to them through their children.

Finally, however, in October 1964, the federal government officially recognized that, in addition to foreign students abroad and in this country, there were thousands of pupils in the United States—in the Southwest, on the Atlantic coast and in New England, on American Indian reservations, and in the Trust Territories; in Puerto Rico, Alaska, Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, California, Colorado, Hawaii, New York, New Jersey, Vermont, Maine, Louisiana, and Florida—whose mother tongue was other than English and who needed specialized instruction in English if they were fully to understand or participate in the American cultural, social, and economic way of life. The NDEA Institutes Section was supplanted by Title XI of the NDEA and supplemented by the Higher Education Act of 1965. Later, the ESOL provisions of the NDEA and the Higher Education Act of 1965 were supplanted, and absorbed within the provisions of the Education Professions Development Act. The EPDA included instruction in English at all levels and, in addition

to students whose native language is other than English, was aimed at assisting native-speaking pupils designated as "disadvantaged" because they spoke a nonstandard variety of English. Most recently enacted is the Bilingual Education Act (Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act), which is designed to meet the special educational needs of children three through eighteen years of age who come from environments where the dominant language is other than English.

It is interesting to note that the first of three ad hoc Conferences for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages was held in March 1964; that the TENES Survey by Harold B. Allen[2] was commissioned by the Office of Education in April of the same year; and that the first meeting on the establishment of a register of TEFL/TESL personnel was held in October 1964, a few short weeks after the enactment of Title XI of the NDEA, authorizing summer institutes for advanced study in ESOL.

The first such institutes were conducted in the summer of 1964 at two universities for 110 elementary and secondary teachers and supervisors of ESOL. The following summer the program was expanded with institutes at four universities for 190 teachers and supervisors. During the summer of 1966, five such institutes for 208 participants were held. In the summer of 1967 there were eleven institutes for 420 participants, and in the summer of 1968, sixteen institutes for 620 participants. Thus, during the period 1964–68, some 1600 ESL teachers were trained under NDEA.

In 1969, the first year of the Education Professions Development Act, there was a total of twenty-five programs. Of these, twenty were concerned with English as a second language or dialect, and five were bilingual education programs. Of the ESOL/ESD programs, sixteen were summer institutes and four were academic year fellowship programs. Of the bilingual programs, four were summer institutes and one was an academic year program. The total number of participants in 1969 was estimated at 830. The grand total of participants in ESL programs from 1964 to 1969 was about 2400.

There is no question that these programs have made a significant contribution to the preparation of teachers of English as a second language. However, the number of persons trained has not been significant in relation to what is needed. There are over 100,000 English teachers in the schools today. Yet Allen's TENES Survey indicated that 33 percent of the elementary school teachers and 50.5 percent of secondary teachers (Table 20, p. 30) felt that they needed further training in the teaching of English to non-English speakers. Among the facts brought to light by the TENES Survey were the following:

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[2]Harold B. Allen, *A Survey of the Teaching of English to Non-English Speakers in the United States* (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1966).

1. That the teaching of English as a second language was not considered to be a discipline in itself, an independent area of professional competence, was made clear in the difficulty encountered in collecting information.
2. Although there was available a list of persons engaged in teaching English to college foreign students, no such list existed for teachers of English to resident speakers of other languages.
3. Although state officials were unable to provide state totals and, in some instances, city administrators were unable to provide city totals, thus making it impossible even to project a reasonable estimate of the actual number of non-English-speaking students in this country in 1965, several million people in the United States (mostly children, though by no means all) faced the problem of acquiring control of English as their second language (pp. 4–10, ff.).

The TENES Survey starkly revealed that the principal facets of the problem were inadequately prepared teachers and inadequate materials. Although some of the characteristics of this problem had previously been realized, no such pinpointing as that report provided was available anywhere. It revealed that teachers entrusted with the teaching of English to Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, American Indian, and other minority group children, were almost totally unprepared for their work. The Survey indicated that of the elementary and secondary school teachers sampled, 91 percent had no practice teaching in ESL; 85 percent had no formal study in methods of teaching ESL; 75 percent had no formal training in English phonetics, morphemics, or syntax; and 61.8 percent had no training in general linguistics (pp. 28–30).

With these data in hand it was now possible to give support to the assertions that there must be many more teachers professionally trained to teach English as a second language, that the professional training should include certain components of fact and theory and practice, that certain new kinds of textbooks must be prepared for such culturally distinctive groups as the Indian children in the Southwest and illiterate non-English-speaking adults, and that certain kinds of overt and practical recognition of the professional nature of the complex problems must occur more widely in educational administration. The TENES report was one more step in this country toward the full recognition of the teaching of English as a second language as a professional discipline in its own right.

The serious shortage of trained teachers and other personnel has more recently been pointed out by Albert H. Marckwardt:

> In view of the tremendous expansion of activity on virtually every front during the past decade, the personnel problem looms large.

> The supply of trained teachers of English as a foreign language, supervisors, and program planners has been far short of the demand, both here and abroad.[3]

As early as January 1964, writing on the same subject, Melvin Fox of the Ford Foundation had said:

> Still, there is a serious shortage of the trained people needed to meet the expanding worldwide demand because of the variety of skills needed: senior scholar-specialists who can help design and organize English-language systems from the top down; scholars and administrators to direct the systems; teachers of teachers; developers of teaching materials; teachers of school and college students. Also, in U.S. universities, personnel are needed to train foreign scholars, teachers and educational administrators and to do remedial language work with a large percentage of the 70,000 foreign students in the U.S.[4]

Still earlier, in 1961, the Center for Applied Linguistics, in its publication *English Overseas: Guidelines for the American Effort in Teaching English as a Second Language,* reported:

> There is already a serious lack of qualified Americans in the field of teaching English as a second or foreign language. As the kind of expansion envisaged in this study begins to take place, the manpower shortage will become so critical as to endanger the success of the whole national effort in the field, unless measures are taken to bring into being the corps of qualified people who will be needed at various levels.[5]

Of course, when we speak of qualified personnel, we assume that a teacher who speaks English as his mother tongue, or even one who has been trained to teach standard English only to native speakers in the average American school, is not thereby automatically equipped to teach the language to non-English-speaking students or to students whose home language is a nonstandard variety of English. He is normally quite unable to analyze or explain the structure of English sentences in any way that would be meaningful or helpful to a foreign learner or nonstandard speaker. He does not know what sounds make up

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[3] "Teaching English as a Foreign Language: A Survey of the Past Decade," *Linguistic Reporter,* Supplement no. 19 (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, October 1967), p. 7.

[4] "English as a Second Language: Development," *Overseas: The Magazine of Educational Exchange, IIE* 3 (January 1964): 16–17. It is interesting to note also that "The number of foreign students . . . rose from 100,262 in 1966–67 to a record 110,315 in 1967–68," according to *I.I.E. Report* 2 (October 1968): 1.

[5] "Manpower Needs" (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1961), p. 19.

the phonological system of the language, how those sounds are made, or how they are related to one another. He has no idea of the way in which the native language or dialect of the learner interferes with attempts to speak standard English. He is unfamiliar with modern methods of language instruction, suitable textbooks, audiovisual aids, or test construction and use. The list of essential types of information and of skills which he lacks could be greatly extended.

In the judgment of those who teach standard English as a second language or dialect professionally, a minimum of nine months of training would be necessary to prepare a teacher fully as a specialist in this field. Especially crucial in the training of ESOL or ESD teachers is their preparation in the application of linguistics to language teaching problems. The Committee on Language Programs of the American Council of Learned Societies has identified five important contributions of linguistics to the teaching of a second language: (1) the scientific analysis of the language to be taught, (2) the study of the contrasts between the learner's native language and the language being learned, (3) the study of the physiology of the sound production in the context of the significant features of the language, (4) the study of the writing system and its relation to the spoken language, and (5) the study of the general nature of language. It is interesting to note the parallel between this statement and our previous statement regarding the historical relationship between TESOL and linguistics. If we substitute the word "dialect" for "language" in the above statements, they would be equally applicable to the teaching of English as a second dialect. Professor Albert H. Marckwardt of Princeton has said repeatedly that the minimum ingredients of a teacher-training program in ESL are courses in the structure of English, introductory linguistics, and methods and materials for teaching English as a second language.

In this connection, there is a growing conviction among many groups of linguists, and among many public school teachers and administrators as well, that the findings of applied linguistics and the modern theory and methodology of second language teaching can profitably be applied to the teaching of English to children whose already established "home peer" language is not adequate to carry them into other social and economic situations. It may be argued that the use of second dialect techniques, paralleling the methodology of second language teaching, is the next natural step in the continuing development of effective English teaching methods. An audiolingual approach would, for example, allow the "disadvantaged" child to begin to master his new dialect in the natural way—first by speaking, and only later by spelling, reading, and writing.

By the same token, those whose training and experience has been primarily in English as a foreign language, usually on the adult level, have much to learn from the experiences and experimental efforts of concerned elementary and secondary school teachers. Together, the

two groups may at least make a beginning towards a "new English" to meet the problems of the "disadvantaged." Furthermore, the alert observations of trained and dedicated teachers on the speech habits of their students may well lead linguistic scientists into new areas of investigation.

To qualify as a "trained" teacher of standard English as a second language or dialect, however, a teacher must be knowledgeable in at least three areas: (1) subject matter, (2) methodology, and (3) the socio-cultural milieu of his students. The subject matter may be further subdivided into (a) theoretical, and (b) applied. On the theoretical side, the subject matter includes courses in theoretical linguistics, i.e., General Linguistics, Phonetics and Phonemics, and Morphology and Syntax. On the applied side, the subject matter includes courses in applied linguistics, i.e., American English Structure, Language Laboratory Principles and Practices, Language Testing, Contrastive Linguistics, and Problems of Urban English.

It is not sufficient that a teacher have command of the subject matter. He must, in addition, know how to transmit not only the knowledge, but also and especially the skills involved in using it. According to the TENES Survey, only 15 percent of the school teachers surveyed had methods courses in ESOL, yet there was a recognition of the need, made manifest by 54.1 percent of the same teachers, ". . . to obtain (additional) formal training in methods courses."

Finally, teaching of standard English to speakers of other languages or dialects is not done in a vacuum. Two-thirds of the students surveyed in the TENES report are in "culturally disadvantaged" environments and handicapped by conditions of poverty. Many also suffer from a disrupted family environment and the presence of negative parental attitudes toward education. These problems are related to a lack of motivation for studying English. The "culturally deprived" environment of students was listed as a problem area for 64 percent of the secondary schools surveyed and 67.7 percent of the teachers surveyed.

The ESOL institutes thus far conducted have typically included study in some combination of applied linguistics concerned with the application of the insights of linguistics to the problems of language teaching, the analysis and comparison of coexisting languages and cultures and the problems of accommodating when two cultures meet, and the opportunity to begin or refresh a knowledge of a modern foreign language. An example of such programs is an academic year fellowship program which was established at Georgetown University in 1968 with the help of the U.S. Office of Education.

However, despite the various federal programs cited above, the need for training has not greatly diminished, particularly in view of the increased emphasis everywhere on language programs for the "disadvantaged." As we have seen, the majority of the programs have been short-term summer programs lasting six to eight weeks. Most

teachers even with such minimum training feel the need for supplementing their course work by attending inservice workshops, colloquia, and lectures conducted by experts in the field throughout the year.

The term "Standard English as a Second Dialect" (or SESD) has recently come into wide use as a label for a new point of view toward English instruction for "disadvantaged" black children. The SESD concept is based on the research of sociolinguists such as William Carroll, Ralph Fasold, Irwin Feigenbaum, William Labov, Roger Shuy, William Stewart, and Walter Wolfram, who have revealed the systematic nature of Negro speech in New York, Detroit, Chicago, Washington, and other American urban areas. These investigators have not only shown that there are widespread and orderly grammatical, phonological, and lexical features which characterize much black English, but have also cast new light on the dialectal divergence that exists within what is accepted as standard English.

Educators have begun to ask if it might not be desirable to incorporate the social dialectologists' objectivity into the English instruction offered to the "disadvantaged" Negro child. Both the black and the white varieties of English are being analyzed as legitimate, stable dialects of a single language, each with its own linguistic structure and its own area of appropriateness and special usefulness. The child is not asked to discard his own dialect, but encouraged to become bidialectal. The philosophy is "additive" rather than "replacive." That is, an attempt is made to add a new register of language to a student's repertoire, rather than to eradicate or replace a register which he already possesses. It is hoped that children can acquire the ability to switch codes instinctively so as to use that dialect which will evoke the greatest amount of cooperation and the least amount of resistance in any given situation. Of course, this is but one possible way of dealing with "nonstandard" dialects.

It is clear that the techniques and materials developed for teaching English as a second language would have some applicability to the teaching of standard English as a second dialect. Both types of instruction demand of the teacher the same kind of insights into the nature of language and language learning, and the contrastive analysis of two linguistic systems seems to be basic to both. In many schools in the Southwest and in our large urban centers, a single teacher must often work with immigrant children (ESOL) and Negro children (SESD) in the same classroom. So far it has been the specialists in TESOL who have taken the lead in developing the SESD concept.

One of these specialists, Dr. Virginia French Allen, has pointed out the following areas of similarity between TESOL and SESD:

> (1) Both foreign-language programs and second-dialect programs are based on a contrastive analysis of the target language (or dialect) with the students' home language (or dialect). And the "target" chosen

for analysis is not the literary form of the language, nor the idealized language prescribed by the older grammar textbooks, but rather the "language of educated ease."

(2) Both foreign-language programs and second-dialect programs view the target language and the students' home language as equally valid systems of communication in their own respective orbits. The target language is not considered "better"; the students' vernacular is not considered "faulty."

(3) Both programs tend to be structure-centered. That is, major attention is given to the grammatical structure of the target language or dialect, not to the vocabulary.

(4) In both second-dialect classes and foreign-language classes, the linguistic system of the target is presented to the student in a series of small steps, each step rising out of the one before.

(5) Both programs emphasize habit-formation. Success is measured in terms of the students' oral fluency in handling the language patterns that are habitual among native speakers of the target language or dialect. Achievement is *not* measured by the students' ability to recite rules or definitions, or to diagram sentences, or to label parts of speech.[6]

On the other hand, the two types of language instruction certainly differ significantly. SESD appears to involve problems of motivation that rarely present themselves in TESOL. Both types demand that a gap between teacher and pupils be bridged, but in SESD the gap is primarily psychological and sociological, whereas in TESOL it is mostly cultural and linguistic. The most "disadvantaged" Negro children usually have at least a passive knowledge of the language to be taught, standard English, which is far more extensive than that possessed normally by children who have just arrived from a non-English-speaking country. The major skills to be cultivated in the case of the former are probably reading and written composition; the latter need prolonged drill in the skills of oral production. The reading materials most suitable for Negro children would rarely be appropriate in TESOL work.

There are still other types of English teaching that appear to fall somewhere in between SESD and TESOL. For example, a Spanish-American child living in an urban "barrio" may fall victim to much the same social, economic, and psychological forces that handicap a black child, and the two may develop the same negative attitudes toward standard English and school. Yet the linguistic problems faced by the Spanish-American may be practically identical to those of a Mexican child learning English in Mexico City. Obviously, the language instruction to be given in the bilingual education programs that are beginning

[6] Virginia French Allen, "A Second Dialect Is Not a Foreign Language," *Linguistics and the Teaching of Standard English to Speakers of Other Languages or Dialects*, Monograph Series on Languages and Linguistics no. 22, ed. James E. Alatis (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1969), p. 190.

to be established all over the United States will involve a whole new set of special methodological and psychological considerations.

In the field of ESD, the following questions still need to be answered:

What is Standard English?

Is there such a thing as "Black English"?

Is "Black English" or "Negro Nonstandard English" (NNE) a separate, foreign language, or merely a social or regional variety of Standard English?

Are the characteristics of Black English systematic or just random?

Are there differences of intonation, stress, pitch, or even gesture?

What is the difference between Black English and Southern White English?

Are features of the Negro Nonstandard Dialect recurrent throughout the country or different for each geographical region?

Are ESL techniques really applicable to ESD teaching without modification or adaptation?

The demand for teachers with training in the teaching of English to disadvantaged groups—SESOLD—has increased overnight. With this demand has come a concomitant need for research in the regional, social, and functional varieties of English.

In the school systems of most large American cities, experimental SESD work—often financed by special grants of federal, state, or foundation funds—is now being carried out. Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended in 1967, the U.S. Office of Education is now subsidizing school districts all over the United States that wish to experiment with bilingual education programs involving some use of a foreign language as the medium of instruction and special approaches to the teaching of English. Groups such as the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Advisory Council on the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language, and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages have devoted a considerable proportion of their most recent meetings to the reading of papers on English for "disadvantaged" groups. The bibliography of the subject is already quite impressive. Complete curricula for preparing specialists are already in operation at a number of universities, notably the University of California at Los Angeles, Columbia, Georgetown, and New York University.

As in the case of ESOL, linguists have contributed to SESD in the way of analytical research, but their interest also extends to sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic factors in the use of standard English on the one hand, and nonstandard English on the other. Other social scientists have now joined the linguists in these latter areas of study, and intensive research is being conducted in several urban areas—New

York City, Chicago, Detroit, Washington, and elsewhere. The staff of the Urban Language Project and the Sociolinguistics Program of the Center for Applied Linguistics is turning out some very impressive work in this field.

Specialists in TESOL have shown great interest in teaching standard English as a second dialect to speakers of Negro Nonstandard English. Drawing on the analytical research being done by the linguists in NNE, they are preparing contrastive studies—nonstandard contrasted with standard—which have served as guides to teachers devising classroom and laboratory lessons in the teaching of SESD. In this connection, a book of particular interest is *Teaching Black Children to Read*, edited by Joan C. Baratz and Roger W. Shuy, and published by the Center for Applied Linguistics.

To meet the need for materials to teach standard English, several staff members of the Sociolinguistics Program of the Center for Applied Linguistics worked in the District of Columbia public schools to determine what new methodologies might prove useful. One of the results of this work is a series of lessons published by New Century in 1970. These lessons, entitled *English Now*, by Irwin Feigenbaum, consist of a student workbook, audio tapes, and a teacher's manual. Another useful book published by the Center for Applied Linguistics is *Teaching Standard English in the Inner City*, by Ralph W. Fasold.

Thus far, the efforts of TESOL specialists in the SESD field have generally been regarded as experimental, but their methodology and materials show a great deal of promise. One of the earliest and better known of these experiments was directed by San-su C. Lin at Claflin University in South Carolina. Her *Pattern Practice in the Teaching of Standard English to Students with a Non-Standard Dialect* (Columbia University Teachers College, 1965) is of particular interest. Soon to appear is Virginia French Allen's textbook for students (seventh grade and up) learning the standard dialect or English as a foreign language. Finally, a special 1969 anthology issue of the *Florida FL Reporter* entitled *Linguistic-Cultural Differences and American Education*, edited by Alfred C. Aarons, Barbara Y. Gordon, and William A. Stewart, and *Linguistics and the Teaching of Standard English to Speakers of Other Languages or Dialects*, edited by James E. Alatis, and published by the Georgetown University Press in 1969, are indicative of the wide interest currently being shown in teaching standard English to speakers of other languages and dialects.

These, then, are the successes.

However, despite the needs and the interest in this field, the outlook for the future is bleak indeed. The most serious problem encountered by personnel engaged in experimental projects involving the application of ESOL techniques to the teaching of ESD is that of teacher training—that is, making the teacher aware first of the existence of the dialect; second, of the systematic nature of its differences from the standard;

and third, of the usefulness of materials based on a contrastive analysis of the differences.

Late in 1969, the U.S. Commissioner of Education stated that a major educational target for the 1970s would be to insure that "no one shall be leaving our schools without the skill necessary to read." Yet, in a memorandum the very next day, Associate Commissioner Don Davies announced the cancellation of the Basic Studies Program of the Education Professions Development Act (EPDA). This decision on the part of the Office of Education constituted a national educational tragedy of the first magnitude. It reflected a general mood in the federal government of retrenchment and steady retreat from the bold plans launched previously. This decision wiped out all the gains made under the National Defense Education Act in English as a second language, bilingualism, English for the disadvantaged, reading, the foreign languages, the several social sciences, and other humanistic studies.

The cutback of $8 million was the Bureau of Educational Personnel Development's share of a $3.5 billion reduction in expenditures ordered throughout the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The tragedy is that the entire $8 million was absorbed by only one of ten categories authorized under the EPDA. It would have been somewhat more sensible to make a proportionate cut across the board in each of the ten categories without completely destroying any one. This singling out of the Basic Studies Program widens the chasm and increases the imbalance between the professional educators and the subject matter specialists. It reflects the tendency in the U.S. Office of Education to replace its own staff of subject-matter specialists by administrative generalists, or to assign specialists to generalist positions. It also reflects the government's general tendency to funnel money through local education agencies rather than through the universities or other institutions of higher education.

Thus, while the Commissioner of Education is bemoaning our literacy problem in the schools, the Office of Education is cutting back on those very programs which would help to solve this problem. Training of the kind that was offered under the Basic Studies Program, in the form of institutes and fellowship programs for teachers, is the very kind of training which played such a major role in the upgrading of science, mathematics, and foreign language instruction under the National Defense Education Act. It is these very programs—i.e., institutes and fellowships in the basic disciplines—that are being abolished. Specifically, this decision will substantially curtail the development of ESOL, as well as bilingualism, foreign language, reading, and English for the disadvantaged.

I am certain that Congress and the Committee on Education and Labor never intended that the EPDA be interpreted, implemented, or administered in this manner. In fact, when the EPDA was passed,

a statement was appended to the effect that the Basic Studies Programs would be supported at least in the same proportion as they had been in previous years despite the "noncategorical" features of the act. It would seem that this understanding has been ignored by the administrators in the Office of Education. In view of our earlier comments regarding the manpower shortage in ESL and ESD, this is a deplorable situation.

Mortimer Graves has stated clearly the vastly increased language needs which face Americans in the second half of the twentieth century. "Foreign language instruction," he said, "is rigorously separated from instruction in English, and the foreign languages one from the other. Language is commonly presented as chemistry would be if the student first took a course in oxygen, then another in hydrogen, and so on through the hundred or so elements instead of taking a course in chemistry in the first place. And, when the student has . . . acquired some skill in a single foreign language, he must begin all over again and go through the same classroom operation if and when—as he most certainly will—he comes to need to add other languages to his armament. The process is preposterous." Graves saw the solution to this dilemma in an educational program which would so train the student in his school years that in later life he could learn additional languages: "With all the powers that maturity, education, linguistic sophistication, and scientific implements of study can give him, what is advocated is a complete overhauling of the presentation of language, both native and foreign, through our high schools in such a way as to provide a progressive approach to satisfactory use of English and at least one foreign language, together with—even more important—the knowledge, the experience, and the techniques further to expand foreign language skills and to surmount whatever language barriers appear in later life without recourse to the classroom."[7] While admitting that this sounds somewhat utopian, Professor William Moulton agrees, noting that "if linguistics could help the student approach this ideal goal even part way, it would be making its greatest possible contribution to the language learning needs of this country and of the world."[8]

The Commission on Instruction and Technology which was appointed in 1968 by the Johnson administration recently recommended the establishment of a National Institute of Education with an initial funding of $565 million for research, development, and one full year of operations. This would include the establishment of a central library of educational resources, demonstration projects, and retraining of teachers and administrators. Special projects would be concentrated in pockets of poverty with deprived minority groups.

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[7] Mortimer Graves, "Languages in Changing Education," *Linguistic Reporter* 1 (August 1959): 4–6.

[8] Moulton, "Linguistics and Language Teaching," p. 109.

But $565 million is "chicken feed," especially when one considers that the country spends twenty times as much on health research and sixty times as much on defense research as on research in education. I would go one step further and suggest that what we need is a National Foundation for Languages and Linguistics for the same amount of money and perhaps ten times as much for education in general. When one considers that language is one thing that separates man from the lower animals, and that it is the vehicle through which we satisfy all our human needs—our need for love, for food, for shelter, and for recognition—it is incomprehensible to me that the most affluent nation in the history of civilization has not been able to contribute substantially to such things as, for example, research on the regional, social, and functional varieties of English. The establishment of a National Foundation for Languages and Linguistics may, too, be utopian; however, what is needed at this juncture of our history is bold thinking and long-range planning which will contribute to the solution of our most pressing national problem: the problem of our poverty-stricken minorities and the urban ghetto.

## On the Conditions of Bilingualism

Robert B. Kaplan

Nowhere is the separation between method, subject, and teacher more apparent than it is in the field of "bilingual education," whether one means by that already abused term the teaching of English to speakers of other languages or the teaching of standard English to speakers of any one of several nonstandard dialects. It is appalling that it is still necessary for the officers of national professional organizations to carry to the public the message that the ability to speak more than one language is really not un-American. The fact that these men feel compelled to reiterate that simple message says volumes about the real extent of monolingual mania in this society. Roger Shuy, in a talk before the NCTE in November 1968,[1] listed three possible approaches to the bilingual problem: (1) what he calls the "Bonnie and Clyde" approach; that is, eradication—"to rid oneself of the stigma of those [undesirable dialect] features by simply eradicating the features . . ."; (2) an attempt to make the entire population "biloquial" by helping individuals learn to switch linguistic codes more comfortably and more widely; and (3) an attempt to make the entire population bilingual by having all speakers of standard English learn one or more "nonstandards" and one or more other languages. Professor Shuy's reasoned analysis is in itself symptomatic of the depth of the problem and of the syndrome of semantic problems which surround it.

Bilingual education means education in two languages. This simple fact has been overlooked or ignored by the vast majority of educators and legislators who have been busily engaged in the creation of bilingual programs. This fact is so simple that it is incredible to have to reiterate it. But while the fact is simple, the implementation of such a concept is so staggering that it is no wonder confusion has developed. If bilingualism really is the aim, then the choices as stated by Professor

[1] See Roger W. Shuy, "Bonnie and Clyde Tactics in English Teaching," in *Florida FL Reporter*, Special Anthology Issue, *Linguistic-Cultural Differences and American Education* (Spring/Summer 1969): 81–83 for additional discussion. In the present use of Professor Shuy's categories, I do not mean to imply that he was seriously suggesting any of these alternatives; rather, I only wish to borrow his categories as suggestive of the only available alternatives.

Shuy are reduced from three to two; either "Bonnie and Clyde–ism," or both of his other choices. At the risk of being guilty of the "either-or," the bipolar, fallacy, let us look at the implications.

The first choice, "Bonnie and Clyde–ism," really is unthinkable. This choice demands not only the systematic eradication of all traces of foreign language and nonstandard dialect, but also the systematic destruction of all those cultures whose languages are to be eradicated and consequently the systematic destruction of the ethnic identity of all individuals who are not native speakers of standard English. Effective implementation of such a plan demands the creation of a police state whose power extends specifically into the school for the protection and development of a learning climate consonant with absolute monolingualism. Furthermore, monolingualism demands a return to international isolationism since political, cultural, and economic contact with non-English speakers would become virtually impossible. Perhaps the case is overstated in the direction of 1984, but some such development is a corollary of enforced monolingualism.

The second choice, "biloquialism," is morally acceptable but logistically overwhelming. American public education has encountered impressive and consistent failure in teaching native English speakers to achieve linguistic liberalism, to speak other languages.[2] So far, at least, it has also largely failed in its attempts to inculcate any sort of "standard" among nonstandard speakers, both domestic and foreign.

Part of the latter failure stems from another semantic problem: the assumption that there is a "standard" to be taught and the correlative assumption that there is a "nonstandard" target. The secondary assumption, coupled with inherent racism, has led to a hue and cry to identify the nonstandard *population*. The basic assumption has led to a furious scurrying about on the part of linguists and materials writers to identify a standard which can be stuffed into the curriculum with all due alacrity. Together, these assumptions seem to lead one back to a situation which, although it does not duplicate, very nearly approximates "Bonnie and Clyde–ism."

Part of that failure also seems to stem from a general unwillingness or inability to recognize a characteristic of language. Whorf and Sapir demonstrated some time ago that there is an essential relationship between language and culture. While it is possible that the ultimate position at least of Whorf may be considered excessively deterministic, one may still posit a definition of language which asserts in part that any given language is the ideal means for the community of its speakers to express the phenomenological world they commonly share. Such a definition does not minimize the universality of experience nor does it deny the possible existence of cross-language generalizations; rather,

[2]See Leon Jacobovitz, "Research Findings and Foreign Language Requirements in Colleges and Universities," *Foreign Language Annals* 2 (May 1969): 438–56.

it accepts the fact that any given language is indeed a closed phonological, syntactic, semantic, and rhetorical system. Such closed systems may exist in partially superimposed states; indeed, they may be describable in terms of Ven diagrams and may share common sub-sets, without destroying their inherent uniqueness, completeness, or individuality.

If a given language is in fact the ideal means for its speakers to express the phenomenological world in which they live, then the violation of that system or the imposition of another must constitute an imperfection or an interference with which the individual speaker can cope only in terms of his individual motivation, aptitude, and attitude. The incredible proliferation of languages (approximately four thousand) around the world without regard to similarity of other factors like climate, geography, or history, may serve to illustrate the point. Man has always found it difficult to cope with the linguistic diversity around him; every culture seems to have produced some equivalent of the story of the Tower of Babel, and it may be possible that linguistic diversity is a function of biological territorial imperative.

Be that as it may, the failures of American public education to teach monolingual speakers of English much about any other language or even about English in its various dialects should have provided some lessons. It should now be obvious that grammar cannot be regarded as some sort of linguistic antiseptic with which children can be sterilized periodically. It should be obvious that any language, including a native language, cannot be taught in three, four, or five hours per week (or 64 hours a semester or 120 hours a year or 240 hours a lifetime). It should also be obvious that a language cannot be taught in aseptically isolated classrooms carefully insulated against the rest of the curriculum. It may be less obvious, but it is no less true, that a language cannot be taught merely as a set of phonological exercises or lexical items, as a syntax, or as any combination of these; nor can one be taught solely through imitation of a model, live or "canned"; nor can one be taught through any means that fails to take into account the total complexity of language or to confront its conceptual and behavioral manifestations as well as its manipulative ones.

The third of Professor Shuy's categories—the attempt to have standard English speakers learn nonstandard English and some other languages—taken alone, is also unthinkable but for reasons quite different from those which invalidate the first category. It is unthinkable because the scope of learning that it demands of a given citizen is so unlikely. If it were seriously attempted, a resident of Los Angeles, for example, because of the linguistic diversity of that city, would have to command at least two broadly defined nonstandard dialects and at least four foreign languages representing at least three utterly unrelated language families. While there is no evidence of any correlation between intelligence (within normative limits) and language learning ability, it may still be somewhat unreasonable to expect an average

human being to control so many languages and dialects as a normal condition of life. It is obvious that the number of languages (over one hundred American Indian languages alone) and the number of dialects physically available within the geographic limits of the United States is so great that no one can seriously expect to accomplish total comprehensibility across the nation.

One tends, too, to overlook the geographic enormity of the United States. Europe is a significantly smaller land mass (the airline distance from Paris to Moscow, for example, is roughly comparable to the distance from New York to Los Angeles), but the concept of linguistic diversity is well established there. It is a logical fallacy to assume that the alleged political unity of the United States must necessarily produce linguistic unity in a land mass the size of the United States when it has failed to do so in Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Vietnam, or even New York.

Bilingualism, however, has now been established as a legal concept; the law mandates that bilingualism is a desirable condition. Unfortunately, the law itself is discriminatory. Confusing linguistic background with economic status, it provides assistance largely to youngsters coming from homes with annual incomes below the magic figure of $3000. The absurdity of this regulatory limitation cuts off from real assistance the non-English-speaking or nonstandard-speaking offspring of those individuals who have succeeded modestly in American society on the assumption, one supposes, that the Deity will assist those who have already begun to assist themselves. But there is no linguistic evidence that the children of modestly successful non-English speakers have fewer linguistic problems than do the children of economically unsuccessful non-English speakers. If the law—that is, the Congress and the state legislatures—wishes to encourage bilingualism and to support it, then it must do so for richer as well as for poorer elements in the society.

Having performed its duty, the law inexorably moves on to other duties, leaving the concept it has spawned in the hands of foster parents. The university system and the public school system are those foster parents, and like archetypal foster parents they put on all the trappings of affection for the offspring, but they are likely to ignore it when its demands become inconvenient, or when other more pleasurable or more profitable activities distract them, or when they get bored with the responsibility.[5]

Two essential questions have been left unanswered: What "standard" shall be taught to "nonstandard" speakers? Who is a "nonstandard"

[5]Two contrasting views of this problem were presented by James Sledd, "Bi-Dialectalism: The Linguistics of White Supremacy" (Paper delivered at the Fifty-ninth Annual NCTE Convention, Washington, D.C., November 29, 1969, and published in *English Journal* 58 [December 1969]: 1307–15, 1329); and William J. Samarin, "Social Dialects in American Society" ("Discussion" presented at the Center for Applied Linguistics Seminar on "Approaches to Social Dialects," Washington, D.C., October 31–November 1, 1969).

speaker? The number of regional and social dialects in the United States is impressive.[4] Which of these will be endowed with prestige and be "chosen" as the universal standard? It is unlikely that one could find a jury to choose or that, if found, a jury could make a choice. Even if it were possible, the laws of linguistic divergence would fragment the standard into new "nonstandards" in a relatively short time. The identification of the target population is even more difficult. One would suppose that monolingual speakers of other languages certainly would form a part of the target, but who else would be included? One can visualize circumstances in which the members of the present academic establishment might be included in the target group as well as circumstances in which—like the present law—individuals with real linguistic interference might be excluded for social, economic, or geographic reasons.

Furthermore, the law has ignored the moderately significant issue of motivation. It is a basic premise of both psychology and pedagogy—not to mention linguistics—that individuals learn, or at least learn more quickly, the things they *want* to learn. However, in the contemporary society, large portions of minority populations have only recently discovered their own languages or dialects as the means for individual identity. Some individuals in these minority groups view the other language or other dialects as prestigious, desirable, good, and necessary; and view the standard as bad, undesirable, unnecessary, and representative of the enemy and its culture. These persons are not particularly well motivated to learn a standard language. The economic argument has been used too often and has held out too many false hopes to be any longer effective.

On the other hand, the monolingual "standard" speaker is likely to be too self-satisfied to care much about learning another language or dialect. After all, everyone who has attained success and who is educated within his view speaks standard. As long as the world, for materialistic, political, or other reasons, caters to him, the monolingual standard speaker really does not need to learn any other means of communication.

So far, the problems have been laid out in such a way as to paint a rather bleak picture. Certainly there are massive and complex problems. But the situation is not hopeless. The danger lies in the search for easy answers and immediate solutions. There can be no doubt that the social, economic, and political ills which underlie the problem demand urgent relief. But it is an error to confuse cause and effect. Language is both a liberating and an inhibiting force. It inhibits because it limits

[4]Susan B. Houston, "Child Black English: The School Register" (Paper delivered at the American Dialect Society Annual Meeting, Denver, December 27, 1969). For another view see the interview with Dr. Kenneth B. Clark entitled "Speech of the Ghetto Child Called Valid Language," *Los Angeles Times*, 27 November 1969.

the available access to the phenomenological world and because it tends to freeze prejudice into unconscious and unrecognized forms. What Shakespeare wrote expresses a preference almost inextricable from the language:

> In the old age black was not counted fair,
> Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name.
> [Sonnet 127]

Bilingualism is a liberating force because it allows a whole new orientation to the phenomenological world and because it tends to provide a different point of view from which to see that prejudice which is fossilized in a language and its literature. The present conditions are in part the effects of the inhibiting nature of language. These effects need immediate relief. Contrarily, language is the cause of some of these effects. The cause needs to be examined and, if possible, adjusted to prevent further development of similar effects. The cause will have to be altered gradually over an extended period of time. A piece of wood may be pulled from the fire and instantly dipped in water to stop its burning, but that treatment will not alter the ultimate capability of the wood to be burned. The development of an external inhibitor to be placed on the wood or the controlled genetic mutation of the plant could do this, but both require extended research and time.

The solution to the problem of bilingualism requires three necessary conditions: the availability of massive financial support, the development of meaningful curricular change at the local level, and time. The massive financial support is necessary because real bilingual education requires reexamination and restructuring of the whole academic establishment. This support must come from all levels of government as well as from private foundations and the public. Furthermore, if the public is to accept bilingualism as an actual aim of the educational system and support its development, educators must undertake both a propaganda effort to "sell" the idea to the standard-speaking population and a corollary effort to involve the nonstandard-speaking community in decision making in an active (not merely an advisory) function. In short, in order for a community to become bilingual, the community must regard bilingualism as desirable and rewarding. All members of the community must share that view. The standard speaker must want to communicate with the nonstandard speaker, and the nonstandard speaker must be willing to contribute his culture to the larger culture, not to be blended in, but to make its unique contribution as a discrete part of the whole. The mere provision of the arena in which communication can begin requires unstinting and continuing support. Beyond that, the development of the needed materials and the implementation of the necessary change, as well as the assurance of adequate time for both, will be expensive.

The development of materials and curriculum must occur at the local level. The linguistic complexity of the United States suggests that any broadscale approach would inevitably become discriminatory. The available legislation must point directions and provide support. But it is no more possible to legislate bilingualism than it is to legislate any form of public morality. Curriculum to be developed must be appropriate to local needs and not merely conform to a grand master plan. The needs of rural versus urban, of megalopolis versus city, of economic versus social environments must be recognized and met. Obviously, the linguistic environment must be taken into account. Present legislation has, as a result of its well-intentioned inhibitions, catapulted itself in one general linguistic direction to the detriment of others. This fact only provides additional evidence that legislators at the seat of government may not be aware of the real problems of their constituents and that the natural inhibiting qualities of language may prevent them from finding out. It also illustrates the fact that decisions about language are political, not linguistic, decisions. The problem inherent even in local control lies with the smaller minorities. It has been noted above that ideally a resident of Los Angeles should control five languages and two dialects. The same would be true in most large cities. One must choose, and only the speakers in a given community—all the speakers—can choose what they wish to speak.

If, as has been indicated earlier in this paper, language cannot successfully be taught in the language classroom in aseptic isolation, it then follows that a language must be an integral part of the whole curriculum. If the community is to become bilingual, all subject matter should be taught indiscriminately to all students in both languages. The language classroom is not even necessary in the curriculum if the entire faculty will assume responsibility for literacy and for some mutually acceptable stylistic standard. Whether the larger community can accept such a condition becomes less critical than whether the academic community can. Language teachers constitute a powerful pressure group within the academic community. Any attempt to deprive them of their *raison d'être* is bound to be viewed with jaundiced eyes. A corollary problem lies again in the minority whose language is *not* chosen by the community. It may be difficult to find qualified teachers of the more technical areas of the curriculum from among the small populations of exotic-language speakers.

The process of language selection, the problem of curriculum, and the need for materials must all be solved at the local level but not with local funds alone, because local funds will not permit the system to be restructured. Local funds absolutely are inadequate to allow the time necessary for the meaningful development of bilingual education. It is necessary to know something of the structure of both languages, to know something of the nature of language learning, to know something of the relative motivation of the student and the teacher,

and to know something of the sequence in which materials are to be presented. This basic research hardly exists. Furthermore, it is necessary to develop materials in both languages and to plan a curriculum which can employ these materials meaningfully. Finally it is necessary to know what the objectives are and to be able to determine whether or not, to what extent, and how they have been achieved. All of these things must be done school by school or at least school district by school district. Obviously, only massive funding from many sources will result in any progress.

Other cheaper, quicker, less complex approaches are possible, but they are not likely to produce functional bilingualism so much as modified monolingualism. The problem calls for language engineering on a scale never before conceived. Either failure to initiate the program or failure to complete it could, however, even in the short run, be more costly than the program itself.

This paper is in part an appeal to the profession to act in the political sphere in an area in which the actions of linguists and language teachers can have a profound effect both on immediate social problems and on the long-range development of this country.

In part it is something else. So far, the abstract qualities of the problem have been discussed, but there are two real operant groups involved—students and teachers. It is a presumption in a society like that of the United States that teaching and learning are formal and societal conditions which occur at least in large part within the formal structure of the school. That very assumption provides the three alternatives with which this paper begins; these alternatives would be absurd if education were solely the concern of the individual or the family.

It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss the role of the student beyond what has already been suggested about learning. It is necessary to add a note about teaching and about teachers. In the introduction to *Teachers for the Real World*, the following important statements occur:

> . . . Teacher preparation must include sensitizing to a variety of legitimate languages. A teacher who is ignorant of linguistics is not a good teacher, no matter what his area of competence. . . .
>
> Anti-intellectualism of teachers can no longer be condoned. The reform of teacher education must be to further scholarship. Teachers must become avid readers consumed by history and by language, conversant with scientific principles, and at home with mathematical manipulations.[5]

[5] B. Othanel Smith in collaboration with Saul B. Cohen and Arthur Pearl for the Task Force of the NDEA National Institute for Advanced Study in Teaching Disadvantaged Youth, *Teachers for the Real World* (The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1969), pp. 7–8, 9.

There is very little doubt that part of the present failure to provide adequate language training is a direct result of the lack of adequate language training among teachers. In the same sense that it is logistically unlikely that every citizen will become not bilingual but multilingual, so it is unlikely that every teacher will become multilingual. Still, it is desirable that every teacher should have linguistic training. That is not to say that schools of education should impose a language proficiency requirement for all degree candidates. Quite the contrary, considerable evidence exists to demonstrate that language requirements are nothing more than requirements; that they do not tend to increase linguistic understanding. In fact, such requirements have been known to produce negative effects by developing a distaste for languages and linguistics. Witness the obvious aversion of generations of children—even after they cease being children—in this country to the simple mention of the word "grammar."

It may be that none of the alternatives posited so far is realistic. The answer may lie squarely in the area of teacher education.

> To the extent that a teacher does not understand the nature of concepts, causes, and values, he does not fully know the subject matter of instruction, and he lacks the logical, psychological, and linguistic sophistication that enables him to manipulate content to the advantage of the pupil.[6]

Since it is probably impossible to make every teacher multilingual, and since it is desirable, even essential, to maintain linguistic diversity, the only viable alternative may be linguistic relativity and sensitivity.[7] It is the unconscious linguistic bias of teachers which is responsible both for the affective relationship between student and teacher and for the cognitive development of comparable bias in the student. Therefore, it becomes the duty of the trainer of teachers to expose the linguistic bias and to provide the teacher some alternative to that bias. In short, the development of linguistic sensitivity and the implementation of linguistic relativity among teachers may provide the only feasible alternative to fascism. As H. G. Wells said, "Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe."[8] In the half century since Wells wrote that sentence, *obsolescence* has become the third factor in the equation. The present views of bilingualism and bilingual education are possessed of all the vitality of the Dodo bird. The political and social climate of the past decade clearly indicates

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[6] Ibid., p. 62.

[7] James Miller dealt with this in "The Linguistic Imagination" (Paper delivered at the Fifty-ninth Annual NCTE Convention, Washington, D.C., November 27, 1969).

[8] *The Outline of History*, Chapter XIV, 1920.

that if something is not done to insure the development of an arena in which communication can occur, catastrophe is imminent.

"Sic transit gloria mundi" is hardly an acceptable answer; in fact, the attitude is more likely to assure that thus passes away the world regardless of the glory. But Nimrod's tower lies broken still, "because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."

## The Future of ESOL: Continuity or Generation Gap?

David P. Harris

The year 1970 marked the beginning of the fourth decade in which American education has been seriously concerned with the teaching of English to speakers of other languages—ESOL. During the past three decades our profession has passed through its infancy (the 1940s), its adolescence (the 1950s), and its early adulthood (the 1960s). If we can assume some validity to this metaphorical consideration of ESOL as a living and growing creature, we would expect the 1970s to be a particularly significant period in the history of this field, for thirty years is roughly the time between the birth of one generation and that of the next. How much, one wonders, will the child resemble the parent? Will the youngster cherish his family history, or will we soon see the development of still another perplexing and frustrating "generation gap"?

In this presentation I shall offer a brief description of ESOL in the three decades that now lie behind us, and suggest something of the direction in which the new generation might be headed. Of necessity, this summary will be somewhat sketchy and will undoubtedly reflect my own preoccupation with but one of several ESOL concerns, the teaching of overseas students at the university level. I apologize in advance for whatever bias my orientation gives to the general account that follows.[1]

### The 1940s

Our first efforts in the systematic teaching of English as a second, or foreign, language date from the early 1940s, being directed at first to the establishment of adult education projects in Latin America under our Good Neighbor Policy, and, at home, to the development of intensive courses for foreign students and scholars attending our colleges and

[1] In selecting the topics for inclusion in my historical survey, I have made considerable use of Albert H. Marckwardt's excellent review, "Teaching English as a Foreign Language: A Survey of the Past Decade," *Linguistic Reporter*, Supplement no. 19 (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, October 1967).

universities. The first intensive, linguistically oriented program of ESOL in the United States was established at the University of Michigan in 1941, under the name The English Language Institute. Within the next few years a small number of other programs of a generally similar nature followed, including the American Language Institute in Washington, which had its origins in an English language and orientation center established in 1942 for Latin American students. With the end of World War II, American ESOL activities gradually spread around the globe, embracing the Far East, the Near East, and portions of Europe. To be sure, the greatest English teaching efforts in non-English-speaking areas came somewhat later than the 1940s, but it is important to recognize that the foundations were being laid in that decade.

It was also during the 1940s that our first important teaching materials in ESOL were published. Chief among these were the intensive courses produced at Michigan for Latin American and Chinese students. In this decade, also, Professor Charles Fries, the first director of the Michigan English Language Institute, produced his historic textbook *Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language*,[2] in which he set forth the "new" approach to language teaching that was the basis of the Michigan instruction.

From the late 1940s also date the first tests of English as a foreign language to be based on linguistic principles. The *Examination in Structure* and the *Test of Aural Comprehension*[3] were also products of the Michigan English Language Institute, and they unquestionably served as the model for many subsequent examinations prepared for foreign students learning English.

The University of Michigan's early dominance of the field is also illustrated by the appearance, in 1948, of the first issue of the journal *Language Learning*, which for at least a decade remained virtually the only outlet in the United States for articles on the teaching of ESOL. (I should point out, however, that the British quarterly, *English Language Teaching*, preceded the American journal by about three years.)

The 1940s are important in the history of ESOL teaching in America because this decade provided the groundwork for what was to become a major educational concern. The 1940s witnessed the beginnings of wide-scale American participation in English teaching abroad as well as the establishment of the first intensive ESOL programs at home. During this decade, the first important texts and tests were published,

[2]Charles C. Fries, *Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1945).

[3]Charles C. Fries and Robert Lado, *Examination in Structure*, 3 forms (Ann Arbor: English Language Institute of the University of Michigan, 1947); and Robert Lado, *Test of Aural Comprehension*, 3 forms (Ann Arbor: George Wahr, 1946).

and these materials were to provide the models for much that would follow.

Before moving on to more recent times, however, let us remind ourselves that America was far from alone in its involvement in ESOL teaching during the forties. Great Britain had already had, by this time, a century and a half of experience in teaching English abroad, and a number of Western European countries also had developed English teaching to a significant level. In one sense, however, America's late entry into the field worked to her advantage, for it meant that from the very outset the teaching of ESOL in the United States was largely under the direction of men and women with linguistic training (a prime example being Professor Fries at Michigan), and that teaching methods and materials could reflect the experience gained in the intensive language programs developed by linguists for the armed forces during the War.

**The 1950s**

The 1950s saw an intensification of the demands for ESOL instruction both at home and abroad. More English institutes were established within our universities, offering intensive language training to young adults who were flocking to our institutions of higher learning, many under U.S. government scholarships. A number of large universities inaugurated special English classes for foreign students who could not compete with American students in the regular freshman English courses. These were primarily non-intensive classes, though a growing number were placed in the hands of young instructors with linguistic training. About fifty colleges and universities came to offer such instruction before the end of the decade.

During the 1950s, our efforts to provide English instruction and materials for non-English speakers were also extended to children of elementary and secondary school age. Again it was Charles Fries of Michigan who, in cooperation with the Department of Education of Puerto Rico, helped to develop a program for the schools of that American Commonwealth.[4]

Most of the new materials of the fifties, however, were again aimed at the young adult. A revision of the earlier Michigan course for Spanish speakers was made available for use in teaching students of all language backgrounds.[5] During the early part of the decade, the American Council

[4]Pauline M. Rojas, Director; Charles C. Fries, Consultant; and Staff, *Fries American English Series: For the Study of English as a Second Language*, 11 vols. (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1952–57).

[5]Charles C. Fries and Staff of the English Language Institute of the University of Michigan, *Patterns of English Sentences, English Pronunciation, Lessons in Vocabulary, Cumulative Pattern Practices*, 4 vols. (Ann Arbor: English Language Institute of the University of Michigan, 1953–55).

of Learned Societies under contract with the U.S. Department of State produced a new linguistically-oriented series[6] consisting of ten versions of the same basic text, each version being prepared for a different foreign language population, such as Greeks, Turks, Burmese, Koreans, and Thais. Each of these volumes was based on a contrastive analysis of English and the specific background language involved, but the use of a new brand of phonetic notation made the books difficult for many of the students and teachers who attempted to use them.

In addition to these major series, an impressive number of instructional materials were the work of individual American teachers and scholars. The number totalled well over sixty texts and textbook series. Of these, however, few were directed to learners above a vaguely defined "intermediate level." At least until the very end of the decade, almost no efforts were made to bridge the enormous gap between the kind of English needed for general conversation and the kind of mastery of the reading and writing skills required by students who would need to function effectively in an English-speaking college or university.

One further point about the teaching materials of the fifties should be mentioned. Because such a large proportion of them were designed for foreign students and scholars intending to pursue academic courses in the United States, the texts tended to emphasize life on American campuses. Such materials had obvious shortcomings for general use overseas, and even as introductions to American culture they tended to be embarrassingly naive.

Teacher-training activities both at home and abroad continued to be at a rudimentary stage during the 1950s. In the United States a dozen or so institutions offered TESOL training on the M.A. level, but these were largely adaptations of general linguistics programs and fell short of offering the kind of concentration on the specific problems and techniques of TESOL. In most of the outside world, short-term seminars or workshops, conducted by American and British specialists either separately or in combination, were the principal resources for the upgrading of teachers in service.

The testing of ESOL was significantly advanced during the 1950s through the proficiency measures developed at the University of Michigan and at the American University Language Center in Washington. For at least the next decade, these two programs would be the chief resources for American universities and government agencies needing information about the English competence of overseas applicants for study and training programs in the United States.

Probably the last significant undertaking of the fifties was the establishment in Washington of the Center for Applied Linguistics, at that time an arm of the Modern Language Association of America,

[6] American Council of Learned Societies, *Spoken English Series* (Washington, D.C.: ACLS, 1953–).

and financed by a small trial grant from the Ford Foundation. The center commenced operations in February 1959, as a "clearinghouse and informal coordinating body in the application of linguistics to practical language problems." From the very beginning, English as a foreign language was a prime area of concern, and it is impossible to overestimate the assistance that the profession has since received from the center, through both its conferences and its many publications in the field of ESOL.

The 1950s, then, witnessed a marked increase in American involvement in English teaching at home and abroad, both in the number of programs being offered to students and in the body of materials prepared specifically for ESOL. Yet because of the particular needs of our English programs of the time, most of our energies were being concentrated on the beginning and intermediate instruction of adult learners, specifically those who needed to function in an American campus environment.

## The 1960s

With the third decade of ESOL's brief history, we move to what I characterized as a period of early adulthood, traditionally a time of increased responsibilities. With the resulting maturity often comes a reappraisal of one's life style and goals, leading, in some cases, to the agony of self-doubt. In some ways this is not an altogether inaccurate description of ESOL in the sixties.

*1. ESOL Teaching Abroad.* As a result of the development of many new nations in Africa, the gradual decline of English standards in places like India, Pakistan, and Ceylon, and a growing willingness among even some Eastern European countries to accept a degree of instructional aid from the West, the teaching of ESOL became a truly global endeavor during the 1960s. It would be impossible to survey comprehensively the many private and governmental agencies, foundations, and university programs that contributed at this time to the teaching of English abroad. A few examples may illustrate the scope and variety of American efforts during the decade.

The United States Information Agency conducted ongoing adult English classes in approximately fifty-seven countries, with a total enrollment of a third of a million students.[7] In addition to the direct teaching of English, the agency annually held hundreds of short-term seminars and workshops for local teachers in countries throughout the world.

Both the Peace Corps and the Fulbright exchange program were

[7] *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: United States Activities, 1967* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1968), p. 5.

heavily committed to English teaching in the sixties. By the middle of the decade, approximately 2,250 Peace Corps volunteers were teaching English in forty countries, and about 115 Fulbright professors and teachers were assigned to English programs in the educational institutions of some twenty-two foreign countries.[8]

The great foundations also played a significant role in a number of areas. For example, the Ford Foundation assisted in the development of training facilities for ESOL in over a dozen countries, and the Rockefeller Foundation likewise supported projects in a variety of overseas locations.

2. *ESOL Teaching at Home.* On the domestic scene, our colleges and universities were also serving a greatly increased number of students from abroad. By the latter part of the decade there were over 90,000 foreign students attending institutions of higher learning in this country. Though many of these were English speaking, or had already acquired a reasonably high degree of English proficiency, many others required further instruction before they could hope to compete successfully with their native American classmates. By the end of the sixties there were some 150 colleges and universities in the United States offering ESOL courses, of which perhaps about forty had intensive programs of between twenty-five and thirty-five hours per week.[9]

But perhaps of greater significance in the history of our profession was the development during the sixties of ESOL programs for the many thousands of elementary and high school students, either immigrants or American born, for whom English was not a native or first language. ESOL programs for children did not, of course, originate in the 1960s, as our earlier reference to Fries' work in Puerto Rico would testify. However, it seems to have been in the last decade that the attention of the profession as a whole became focused on the domestic situation.

One very important segment of our population receiving more attention in the sixties was the American Indian children, of whom there were about 50,000 enrolled in the 264 schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.[10] Among the efforts to upgrade English instruction to these children were the following: (1) a BIA-supported study of the problems of teaching English to American Indians, carried out in 1967 under the auspices of the Center for Applied Linguistics; (2) the BIA-sponsored thousand-teacher workshop, held in the South-

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[8] See, respectively, *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: United States Activities, 1966* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1967), p. 4; and Trusten W. Russell, "Opportunities for Service Offered by Government Agencies," in *On Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*, Series II, ed. Carol J. Kreidler (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1966), pp. 17–18.

[9] Marckwardt, p. 4.

[10] Russell, p. 16.

west in June 1967; (3) the development of ESOL materials for Navajo children in the beginning grades, under the direction of Robert Wilson of UCLA,[11] and an adaptation of the *Fries American English Series* by Mary Jane Cook of the University of Arizona; and (4) at the very end of the decade, an evaluation of English teaching in Navajo-area schools under a BIA contract with the TESOL organization.

Still other important non-English-speaking groups of children within our schools in the 1960s were those from families who had immigrated from Puerto Rico, Cuba, Mexico, and other Latin American countries. Most of these children were concentrated in such urban areas as New York City, Miami, and greater Los Angeles, or in the southwest regions that border Mexico.

We may acquire some grasp of the dimensions of these efforts by considering the numbers of Spanish-speaking children attending schools in two representative cities. In New York City there were in the mid-sixties approximately 200,000 children of Puerto Rican and other Latin American origin in the schools, of whom about 88,000 were rated as seriously handicapped in their use of English. And in the same period Miami schools were serving about 21,000 Spanish-speaking children, of whom about 3,350 were in special programs because of the severity of their English problems.[12]

These examples may serve to illustrate the extent of what might be referred to as the ESOL "population explosion" of the sixties and help to explain why the past decade saw a corresponding "publications explosion" as well as greatly increased provision for teacher-training programs. To these two topics we now turn briefly.

*3. ESOL Materials.* A comparison of the standard ESOL bibliographies for the mid-fifties and the mid-sixties shows that the number of textbooks produced by American writers for the general ESOL market more than doubled during that ten-year span. I have already alluded to the new materials designed for non-English-speaking children in our elementary schools. At the other end of the spectrum were the various collections of readings for the mature student of college age—collections which, in the words of one observer, reflected the growing realization that the student needs a considerably more profound introduction to the principal facets of American culture than the campus dialogs provided in earlier textbook series.[13]

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[11] For a report of this project, see Robert D. Wilson, "Bilingual Education for Navajo Children," *TESOL Quarterly* 3 (March 1969): 65–69.

[12] Mary Finocchiaro, "Teaching the Spanish-Speaking Child in New York City," in *On Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*, Series III, ed. Betty Wallace Robinett (Washington, D.C.: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1967), p. 58; and Pauline Rojas, "The Miami Experience in Bilingual Education," *On Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*, Series II, p. 43.

[13] Marckwardt, p. 5.

Additionally, during the latter part of the decade the first steps were taken toward developing materials to assist the mature learner of English to acquire facility in written expression. Although it is still too early to predict how much success we will ever have in teaching the elusive and only vaguely understood skill of writing, some of the research efforts of the 1960s yielded fascinating results in this area. Among these was the work done in identifying the different traditions of writing style existing in various cultures. For example, we now see more clearly that the Arab student does not approach a writing assignment in the same way as the Greek or the Korean, nor would these students use the same methods of developing their ideas. Through contrastive analyses of written style we might be able to offer students of different cultural backgrounds very different instruction in the writing of formal English. To date, the new insights have not been put to much use in the preparation of ESOL writing manuals, but the possibilities are intriguing.

The "publications explosion" of the sixties involved reports of research as well as textbooks and reference materials for the ESOL teacher and teacher-trainer. By the middle of the decade the flood of printed material had reached such proportions that no worker in the field could possibly hope to keep himself up-to-date without professional help. During the sixties the most valuable bibliographical service was that rendered by the Center for Applied Linguistics, whose comprehensive bibliographies of materials were published in 1964 and 1966 and supplemented in 1969. Regrettably, a change in CAL policy has brought an end to the production of these exceedingly useful annotated surveys.

Another highly important bibliographical resource dates from the late 1960s and fortunately remains available to us in the 1970s. This is the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) system, a nationwide program of the U.S. Office of Education designed to collect, process, and disseminate information on educational research and related materials. Work is divided among a number of subject-oriented clearinghouses, the one devoted to linguistics originally being housed at, and administered by, the Center for Applied Linguistics. In 1967 the Clearinghouse for Linguistics first received Office of Education funds to include ESOL in its coverage, and publications have comprised both bibliographical surveys and state-of-the-art papers of a highly informative nature. Recently this clearinghouse was merged with the foreign languages clearinghouse and transferred to the Modern Language Association of America, but we continue to enjoy the basic ERIC services in linguistics.

Other important programs developed in the 1960s to produce teaching materials and research studies were the network of regional educational laboratories established by the Office of Education under the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Establishment of

this system brought us another dazzling array of acronyms: SWCEL (Southwestern Cooperative Education Laboratory; Albuquerque, New Mexico); SEDL (Southwest Education Development Laboratory; Austin, Texas); SCREL (South Central Region Educational Laboratory; Little Rock, Arkansas); and so forth. In 1972 the entire program was transferred to the new National Institute of Education, but the work of the laboratories—at this writing somewhat reduced in number—continues.

*4. ESOL Teacher Training.* A survey by the Center for Applied Linguistics in the mid-sixties[14] showed that over thirty colleges and universities were offering at least three courses in teacher training in ESOL, and during the latter half of the decade the number predictably increased. At least a score of institutions offered master's degrees in ESOL training or in fields which allowed a heavy concentration of work in this field, and at least a half-dozen universities offered doctorates with specialization in TESOL.

During this period the federal government, too, became heavily committed to teacher training in this field. The National Defense Education Act, established in 1958 to improve foreign language instruction in the United States, was revised in 1964 to include ESOL as a foreign language under the provisions of the act. During the period 1964 to 1968, some 1600 elementary and secondary school teachers and administrators attended the NDEA summer institutes in ESOL and English as a second dialect (ESD).[15] Programs at the institutes typically included the study of applied linguistics, ESOL methodology, and anthropology and culture. Federal funds were provided to cover both the operating costs of the programs and the living expenses of the participants.

In 1969, NDEA was supplanted by the Education Professions Development Act, whose programs enrolled teachers at all educational levels and included both ESOL and ESD. Other support to teacher training was offered at the end of the decade by the Bilingual Education Act, designed to improve instruction to children up to the age of eighteen.

Thus we may see from the foregoing that in the 1960s teacher training activities in the United States were aimed more and more at meeting purely domestic needs, and for the first time included relatively large numbers of teachers who were already experienced in teaching standard English to speakers of other languages or dialects.

*5. Professional Associations.* In the 1960s ESOL teachers were also being served by their professional associations. Special committees or interest groups were formed to initiate or coordinate ESOL convention

[14] *University Resources in the United States for Linguistics and Teacher Training in English as a Foreign Language, 1966* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1966).

[15] The figure was obtained by adding the enrollments cited in the Office of Education's annual reports.

activities in such organizations as the Speech Association of America (now the Speech Communication Association) and the National Council of Teachers of English. During the first half of the decade the largest professional ESOL body was still the English Language Section of the National Association of Foreign Student Advisers (subsequently renamed the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs). In the middle of the decade this ESOL group was somewhat reorganized to form a semiautonomous association within the parent organization. The name they adopted was, significantly, the Association of Teachers of English as a *Second* Language—ATESL. The association's choice of the term "second language" instead of "foreign language," which had generally been favored during the forties and fifties, reflects the growing concern of the profession as a whole with those domestic learners who could not accurately be characterized as foreigners.

The membership of ATESL was, and remains, largely teachers of ESOL at the university level. It was a sign of the growing maturity of the profession that increasing concern was expressed over the lack of a single, all-inclusive professional organization that might bring together ESOL teachers and administrators at all educational levels—from elementary school to graduate school, from those working with migratory farm workers to those teaching foreign military personnel. The result was a series of three conferences sponsored by NAFSA, NCTE, SAA, MLA, and the Center for Applied Linguistics. The first of these conferences, held in 1964, marked the debut of still another—and, hopefully, more flexible—professional designation: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. (It was argued at the time that "second language" did not accurately describe the place of English in many parts of the world.) The end result of these highly successful conferences was the establishment in 1966 of a new and independent organization, TESOL, which has since been providing the field with an annual convention and an excellent quarterly journal.

A similar cooperative effort by the professional associations and interested government agencies led in 1962 to the establishment of the National Council on the Testing of English as a Foreign Language. In a series of important conferences, the council agreed on the advisability of setting up a new and improved English proficiency testing program which might be acceptable to all colleges and universities in the United States, and to the various government agencies concerned with the evaluation of foreign students' English. The result of these meetings was the development of TOEFL—Test of English as a Foreign Language—which, by the end of the decade, was testing some 56,000 candidates annually.

*6. ESOL and ESD.* No picture of the history of ESOL in the sixties would be complete without some consideration of the interaction of ESOL and ESD—English as a second dialect—during the decade. For the same decade that saw the emphasis in ESOL shift from the

international to the domestic scene also witnessed the growth of a long overdue concern for those many thousands of American children and adults whose academic and occupational success, and social mobility, are severely restricted by the kind of English they use and by their difficulties in dealing with the written word. An adequate tracing of the history of linguistically based instruction in so-called standard English would require a paper in itself. In the present context I must confine myself to some general remarks about the manner in which ESOL techniques were applied experimentally to the teaching of ESD.

Such an application was inevitable, for applied linguists in the mid-sixties naturally thought it plausible that the considerable knowledge acquired since the 1940s in the teaching of foreign languages, particularly English, could be profitably utilized in teaching those Americans who, though native speakers of English, were nonetheless language handicapped. Thus it seemed appropriate to begin with a contrastive analysis of background and target dialects to identify the essential points of difference: those which distinguish the "standard" dialect from the "nonstandard." These items could then be drilled in the familiar sequence of mimicry, repetition, and substitution. When the students had mastered the new patterns, they would be given the opportunity to practice the patterns in real-life contexts, as through role playing. Following contemporary ESOL procedure, reading and writing were frequently delayed until after a period of extensive oral pattern practice.

Teacher-training programs in ESD also tended to parallel the general ESOL format, with classes in English phonology and grammar, applied linguistics, and methodology. Often a strong sociological component was added, for it was soon discovered that the attitudinal problems of the speakers of nonstandard English were very different from those of foreign students highly motivated to learn English as a key to academic success, and that these kinds of problems were as serious as the strictly linguistic ones. Here was an important lesson which applied linguists learned from the field of ESD.

*7. Methodology.* I suggested earlier that educational disciplines, like man himself, frequently enter a period of self-questioning and reappraisal in their mature years. The decade of the sixties was very definitely a period of agonizing reappraisal in the teaching of foreign languages—a period when all the time-honored dogmas were strongly challenged, when the traditional idols were given a vigorous shaking, and when some were even overthrown.

We had entered the 1960s with a methodological base first developed in the 1940s and further articulated and refined in the 1950s. The principles of this so-called aural-oral or audiolingual method were derived both from the discipline of linguistics and from certain ideas of behaviorist psychology. Language was viewed as a system to be established as a set of habits through the constant repetition of patterns, with emphasis on those features of the target language that contrasted

with those of the background language. In many of the popular textbooks, new structures were introduced with a minimum of grammatical explanation, and much drill material (minimal-pair exercises, for example) was constructed without much regard for the meaningfulness of what it was the students were repeating. Emphasis was given to the spoken language, with reading and writing largely deferred to the intermediate level of instruction.

It would be safe to say, I think, that most of us felt a reasonable degree of confidence in this methodology at the beginning of the last decade, our chief concerns being with the need for more and fuller contrastive analyses, more and better teaching materials along the lines outlined above, and more extensive teacher-training facilities. Then, quite suddenly, developments from the outside began to shatter our complacency. For these new developments, two groups of scholars were primarily responsible: the theoretical linguists and the psychologists.

First and foremost, the work of Chomsky and other generative-transformational grammarians began to call into question our basic views of the nature of language and language acquisition. A good, brief discussion of the new set of assumptions that have evolved from the work of these "new grammarians," directed to the teacher of English to speakers of other languages, will be found in Ronald Wardhaugh's paper on the state of the art in ESOL, issued at the end of the sixties by the ERIC Clearinghouse for Linguistics.[16] I will here say only that if there is any validity in the new assumptions, then we must question both the statements we have been making to our students about the target language—in this case English—and the behavioristic methods we have employed in attempting to give our students a competence in that language.

Secondly, our behavioristic methodology has been challenged by the work of the psychologists and psycholinguists. For what they have been telling us, particularly since the mid-sixties, is that in our zeal to drill, drill, drill our students, some of us have undoubtedly overlooked or at least grossly underestimated the fatigue and boredom factors; and we have assumed too innocently that our students will accept the goals we have in mind for them, which we often do not articulate with much care or skill.

I shall return to this subject in my tentative predictions about the future. I do want to say at this point, however, that I would direct the foregoing criticisms less at the conscientious classroom teacher than at some of the writers of textbooks and the more ivory-towerish trainers of teachers. Fortunately for both our students and the profession itself,

[16] Ronald Wardhaugh, *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: The State of the Art* (Washington, D.C.: ERIC Clearinghouse for Linguistics, Center for Applied Linguistics, 1969).

good teachers have always had the wisdom to shy away from methodological extremes and from the way-out textbooks that have all too often been thrust at them. What the psychologists have recently been telling us are things that the good teacher has intuited all along. But some specialists will not accept a patent truth until it has been handed to them, complete with footnotes, by one of their own kind.

Finally, I would again note that our sister discipline, English as a second dialect, has recently been adding confirmation and reinforcement to the message of the psychologists regarding the importance of student motivation and goals, and the pedagogical problems which their absence can create.

**Predictions for the 1970s**

Having brought the history of ESOL up to the 1970s, I would end by venturing a few cautious predictions about future trends.

The numbers of foreign students coming to this country for academic study and technical training seem to have levelled off. Nevertheless, the teaching of English as a *foreign* language, both at home and abroad, should continue to receive its share of attention in the seventies. And, to judge from the manuscripts the publishers have been sending us for review, there will continue to be a large number of new materials for this area of instruction, particularly textbooks to guide the advanced-level learner in the development of the reading and writing skills.

At the same time, the emphasis of the 1960s on the domestic teaching of English as a *second* language will undoubtedly be maintained—and even increased. We shall see many new publications prepared for specific groups of younger learners, such as American Indian children and Spanish-speaking children in California and the Southwest. Much attention will surely be given to the development of sound bilingual programs, in which both the learners' background language and English will be utilized in subject-matter instruction. And finally, we may anticipate that further efforts will be devoted to finding more effective ways of utilizing ESOL techniques in the field of adult basic education, a very important service area whose "target population" includes a substantial number of non-English-speaking Americans.[17]

Native American speakers of nonstandard English will, we may assume, continue to receive their share of professional attention in the seventies, and many specialists who have heretofore concentrated on ESOL will no doubt turn their energies to the teaching of ESD in our urban areas.

Answers to a number of fundamental questions will need to be

[17] Dennis R. Preston, "English as a Second Language in Adult Basic Education Programs," *TESOL Quarterly* 5 (September 1971): 181–96.

found—and generally agreed upon—before substantial progress can be made. Can we validly regard so-called black English as a form of the language significantly different from nonstandard white English? And, if so, does black English have the same features throughout the country? Is it really practicable to ask speakers of nonstandard English to learn standard English as a supplementary dialect? And, if so, should standard English continue to be taught by a quasi-foreign language strategy? And if the answer to this question is affirmative, what modifications should be made in ESOL techniques?

In regard to the last question, it is my personal feeling that much of the early ESD material was based on overly optimistic assumptions about the direct transferability of ESOL techniques to an ESD teaching situation. As a result, extremely tedious ESOL-style drills were sometimes imposed on students who were already speakers of English and who could neither take the lessons seriously nor accept the advertised goals as relevant.

Clearly, then, we need to learn a great deal more about the teaching of standard English as a second dialect, and teachers of ESD and ESOL must cooperate with one another for their mutual benefit. As new discoveries are made, they must quickly be communicated to the classroom teacher, through both publications and teacher-training programs. Unfortunately, the future of the latter looks extremely dark at the moment. Late in 1969 the Office of Education announced the cancellation of the Basic Studies Program of the Education Professions Development Act (EPDA), an action with the most unfortunate consequences for ESOL, ESD, and bilingual education. It was this program that provided for the institutes and fellowship programs for teachers which did so much in the latter sixties to upgrade the quality of language instruction in our schools. One must fervently hope that the federal government will soon come to realize what this loss means to American education and will redress this serious wrong. Meanwhile, we must look to the universities, state departments of education, and professional associations to keep the light burning on the generally very dark teacher-training scene.

Finally, I would venture to predict that ESOL and ESD methodology and classroom materials will more and more reflect the insights gained from generative-transformational theory in the years that lie immediately ahead. Of course, as we have heard so often, there is as yet no clear idea *how*—or indeed, many would say, *whether*—the new linguistic theories can be effectively applied to language pedagogy. Yet if for no other reason than that the new generation of ESOL/ESD teachers will be oriented toward the new points of view, the experimental application of these theories seems assured. Undoubtedly in the scramble, as in the past, some of the materials built on the "latest ideas" will be unworkable nonsense. As I stated earlier, I have every confidence that good teachers will quickly recognize them as such. At the same time

I would predict that generative-transformational theory will ultimately make its positive contribution to our field, finding its place alongside the best of the past wisdom. I am confident that there will be gradual evolution rather than violent revolution in ESOL pedagogy, or, to return to my original metaphor, that the new generation ESOL will be a legitimate offspring of the creature born some thirty years ago.

# 3 PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING ESL AND ESD

## Attitudes of the ESL and the SESD Teacher

Harold B. Allen

Our language is part of us. Although one kind of linguist prefers to busy himself with the theoretical study of the general underlying system of abstract relationships and their rules, language may also be considered what we do when we communicate. My language is part of me; yours is part of you. If you don't like me or what I do, you don't like my language. If I don't like you or what you're doing, I don't like your language. It works the other way, too. You already may have acquired a dislike for my kind of language, perhaps just because it's different from yours and you don't understand me readily, or perhaps because you have heard it already from people you look down upon or fear. If so, then you don't like me. And if for some reason or other I already have acquired a dislike of your kind of language, then I don't think much of you either.

Let's try something on for size. Early in 1970, NCTE's Commission on the English Language and the Center for Applied Linguistics cosponsored in Washington a meeting of business and government people administratively concerned with educational programs for blacks. The purpose was to suggest the role of linguistic information and competence in any specific program dealing with training in English. A number of my experiences during the conference came during a workshop for about thirty persons who have the responsibility for training operators in eastern and southern Bell Telephone companies. Many of these operators, particularly in the urban centers of Baltimore, Washington, Philadelphia, and New York, were high school dropouts with a southern background and with full control over only what is sometimes called black English. In their training, they were supposed to develop additional control over as much standard English pronunciation, vocabulary, and syntax as they needed to take care of customers' requests for directory assistance. One Washington, D.C., Bell representative told of a girl who was finding one customer's questions too much for her. The customer was becoming impatient and even abusive. The supervisor noticed that the girl was frantically turning directory pages in her search for the desired information and seemed harassed. As the supervisor drew near to help, she heard the girl, by this time

frustrated beyond her limit of endurance, say in despair to the customer, "Shit, man, ah doin' the best ah kin."

Now ask yourself this question: "What exactly was my reaction to what that girl said?" Think of it for a moment.

Would you describe your reaction as primarily focused upon the fact that it was I who used the vulgarism *shit*, even in a quotation? Was it primarily focused upon the girl's language: her spontaneous use of that vulgarism, the absence of any form of the verb *be*, the pronunciation of *I* and *can*? Or was your reaction one of empathy with the girl, struggling to keep cool while being badgered by a customer who perhaps had already indicated his resentment at hearing a voice he had identified as black, but then helplessly resorting to her ordinary speech? If yours was one of the first two reactions, you may well have some distance yet to go in your concern with teaching English as a second dialect or even as a second language. If yours was the third reaction, you are ahead of many of your fellow teachers and educators.

The only other time I have used that anecdote in public was early in 1970, when I was meeting with about 125 teachers from four or five closely built mining communities in southern New Mexico. Here the situation was not one of black nonstandard in contrast with white standard, but rather of Mexican-Spanish and Mexican-Spanish-English in contrast with the white standard of the schools. The proportion is high. In one of the communities from which some of the teachers came, about 85 percent of the residents have Spanish as their first or only language. The teacher responsible for my visit there, one who is directing the local bilingual education project, told me later that my use of that same anecdote and my subsequent statement really jarred some of the audience.

Many of these teachers were imported from outside the area, some even from distant states. As "Anglos" they found themselves confronted by these children, many from families on welfare and obviously without adequate physical comforts, and speaking a kind of English—if they spoke English at all—marked by a high frequency of all kinds of features the teachers had been taught to consider as degrading, vicious, illiterate, wrong, and incorrect. Now with this virtually automatic reaction to the children's speech, what was their inevitable reaction to the children? Predictably, the children were considered "stupid," to use the term widely employed by some of those teachers.

The same day I visited a language laboratory session for second graders. I noticed in particular an alert, bright-eyed youngster ready with his responses and eager to volunteer. His parents spoke no English, but he was learning English rapidly. I noticed a pretty little girl, quiet but attentive, responding with care and precision. She had come with her parents from Mexico only three weeks earlier. They were only two of a class of lively, responsive, appealing children. The teacher

was not an Anglo; she could ask questions and supply explanations in Spanish if necessary. She clearly had a tremendous rapport with those children. But from that class the children would go to their regular room to another teacher, an Anglo, to whom they would be "stupid" for no reason but their language, their kind of English.

The case is hardly unique in our great Southwest, from Texas to California. Indeed, it was only recently that an indignant parents' lawsuit finally enjoined the schools in California from assigning Spanish-background children to classes for the retarded. True, the crass reason for the assignment was simply that a school received a larger per capita allocation of tax funds for students in classes for the retarded than for students in classes where English was taught as a second language. Yet the previously unchallenged overt basis of the classification was the language of the pupils, not the rating on any intelligence test. The reasoning assumed that a child who doesn't speak English as a native speaker does certainly could be retarded, so why not, then, classify him as retarded. Look at all the extra money he brings! Besides, he would learn good English if he were really bright, wouldn't he?

Even when such terms as "stupid" are not used, we find other words and phrases that rest upon the same underlying assumption of class or ethnic superiority on the part of the user. For example, the British sociologist, Basil Bernstein, uses the expression "restricted code" to describe the speech of London slum children and adults. His own kind of English he happily denominates as an "elaborated code."

A somewhat comparable attitude was expressed by the psychologists Carl Bereiter and Siegfried Englemann. In their research in Urbana, Illinois, they listened to the responses of preschool black children in a highly artificial, if not threatening, situation and concluded therefrom that the children were deficient in cognitive skill, could not express negation, were illogical, and indeed were otherwise in a pretty bad way mentally. Their feeble attempts at language were so inadequate, according to Bereiter, that a program for them should be devised on the assumption that learning should start from scratch, as if they had no language at all.

This notion, in its generalized form usually called the deficit theory, posits the existence of a basic inadequacy in the speech of the people to whom it is applied. The notion is extremely pervasive among psychologists, educational administrators, speech correctionists, and many teachers in special programs that have made use of the Bereiter and Englemann book. It can even subtly color the thinking of people who can honestly deny accepting it. Some time ago I attended a small dinner party in Minneapolis. During the conversation one of the guests, a man concerned with preparing materials to help teachers know more about the language they teach, referred to black students' "lack" of language competence. He was at once called on his use of that term

in the materials, as implying that his own language was the norm for all occasions for everyone. He denied this. Yet the next day he telephoned me to say that the matter had worried him greatly and that he had come to realize that he really did hold that assumption. He was using "lack" with the implication that black speech was deficient in something that by his normal criterion should be there. The term is egocentric if not ethnocentric in its implication that what is not present should be present according to the user's criterion. But the absence of something is not necessarily a lack. You would not say that your home lacks a mine tailings distributor or that your automobile lacks a torpedo ejection tube. No, *lack* implies the absence of something the user thinks should be present; it implies a deficit.

Now this manifestation of ethnocentricity with respect to language is apparently of long standing. Perhaps it's a built-in characteristic. Certainly it is not a phenomenon that has suddenly appeared because of the urgency to teach English as a second dialect or a second language in this country. Although the ancient Greeks and Romans two thousand years ago came into contact with a variety of languages other than their own, they apparently considered them not worth studying, since obviously their speakers were inferior to both Greeks and Romans.

We who teach English live under the burden of a special inheritance in this respect, the presence of those standards of usage that reflect a feeling of superiority on the part of those who proclaim them. The first clear evidence of their beginnings is in the sixteenth century. In his *English Scholemaister* in 1596, Edmund Coote enjoined the reader not to imitate "the barbarous speech of your countrie people," such as *sample* for *example*, *yelk* for *yolk*, *stomp* for *stamp*, *yerb* for *herb*, the *mell* standeth on the *hell* for the *mill* standeth on the *hill*, and *parfit* for *perfect*. Then on the same page he says, "Take heed also that you put not . . . *id* for *ed* as *unitid* for *united*, which is Scottish." Yet today, the English Dialect Survey shows that this *id* pronunciation is found all over England and Scotland, and incidentally it is characteristic also of Northern and Southern American speech. Perhaps Coote held himself superior to both farmers and the Scots.

Alexander Gill, in his *Logonomia Anglicana* in 1619, specifically advises his readers against accommodating themselves to the speech of cowherds and plowmen—"non ad illum sonum quem bubuli . . . exprimunt inter loquendum." Men who work with oxen obviously are inferior; their speech must be inferior. Later in the century, in 1685, the grammarian C. Cooper, in his *Grammatica Linguæ Anglicanæ*, also found that superiority to farmers called for rejection of their speech: "Si accurate scribere velimus, vitanda est barbara dialectus." He then offered such examples of their barbarous dialect as *shet* for *shut*, *sarvice* for *service*, *fut* for *foot*, *stomp* for *stamp*, *mought* for *might*, *whuther* for *whither*, and *ommost* for *almost*.

But not all inferior people lived in the country. In addition to

the rustics there were also city dwellers to be looked down upon as low and vulgar. In *The Rambler* in 1752 (No. 168), Samuel Johnson perceptively observed: "No word is naturally or intrinsically meaner than another. . . . Words become low by the occasions to which they are applied, or the general character of them who use them." Three years later, in his great *Dictionary of the English Language*, Johnson himself applied *low* as a label of censure to 214 different entries. Although sometimes he apparently used it only as a blanket epithet of condemnation, there are many instances that surely reflect his feeling of superiority to users of the objectionable words. *Job* is "a low word now much in use." *To go to pot* is "a low phrase." *To take in*, meaning "to cheat; to gull," is "a low vulgar phrase." *Clever* is "a low term."

On this side of the Atlantic even the egalitarianism of Jacksonian democracy never adversely affected the continuity of the formal tradition that statements about language justifiably reflected a sense of social and intellectual superiority. Implicit in the handbooks and manuals of usage and in the kind of prescriptive grammar that until recently dominated our schoolrooms, is this feeling not just of rightness but also of righteousness. It is precisely this fact that has prompted me to give so much attention to the background of certain attitudes toward language use. This attention is part of our cultural heritage: it is mine and it is yours; it is the heritage of most of the teachers whose concerns today are being directed toward the teaching of standard English to people who do not speak any variety of it. Admittedly several origins exist for the prescriptive rules of school grammar, and behind some of them is the assumption of superiority on the part of the person who promulgates and accepts them. Whatever other considerations—racial, social, or economic—may enter into one's attitude today, it is difficult for many teachers not to consider as somehow inferior the Appalachian children whose dialect is not theirs, the black children speaking what has come to be called black English, and the Chicano or Puerto Rican children whose English is strongly colored by their native nonstandard Spanish. I cannot quite avoid comparison with the nineteenth century Christian missionaries who, with certainly the highest motives, sought to change the minds and manners of Africans and Polynesians, to convert them to Christianity, and yet all the time never relinquished the assumption overtly put by Kipling that they were taking up "the white man's burden" by helping "lesser breeds beyond the sea."

Language difference does not always engender this kind of feeling. Wallace Lambert of McGill University has carried on research into attitudes toward various foreign languages and foreign accents. He has found that factors other than language difference affect the attitudes. I suspect that most of us have no negative reaction to a French accent, and I confess to having been delighted by the accent of the Dutch stewardess on a KLM flight from New York to Amsterdam. There

are national and regional dialects of English that likewise evoke no adverse feeling from most of us. Don't you enjoy hearing, for instance, a Scotsman?

There is no one answer to the question of why we accept some language contrasts, some dialect contrasts, and not others. There are indeed specific social, economic, and racial differences that can be found to correlate with language differences. But I would like to suggest that when the correlations are linked to an attitude holding both the factor and the language to be inferior, then in all such situations there is a central core. What is held in common is the assumption that the speakers of this different language or dialect constitute a threat. Somehow they threaten our social or economic integrity and balance. They threaten our security, our self-righteousness, perhaps even our conscience, by arousing a feeling of guilt. When they threaten us, we take refuge in this feeling of superiority and attach the tag of inferiority to their speech.

A great deal of linguistic insecurity has been built into our English teaching. It may have been built in to achieve security, but it provides a specious kind of security. The lower middle-class teacher insisting rigorously upon adherence to the book rules is not secure in his speech; he is pitiably insecure. He relieves his insecurity by language correction when he finds what he thinks are errors in the language of children who, while in the standard English stream, still manifest a certain linguistic virtuosity from time to time. If such a teacher retains this insecurity and this attitude—and he is quite likely to—when he teaches black students or foreign language background students, then he is in real trouble. It does not take long for the students to sense that he looks down upon their speech as wrong, as inadequate, as second-rate. And if they do, the psychological hurt that the teacher has caused is almost impossible to heal.

Help for the teacher must come, it seems to me, from whatever linguistic sophistication can be developed as the result of such an institute as this, or from inservice training. For the prospective teacher, elementary or secondary, it must come from specific work in linguistics and a properly oriented course in linguistic anthropology. What is really needed is a kind of cultural sensitivity training through linguistics. A teacher with this preparation will not consider the Chicano's speech as a collection of errors; such a teacher will not see the black child's "My teach ask me where de chalk" as a mistake; such a teacher will not follow Bereiter's advice to force children to answer questions with complete sentences; such a teacher will accept the child's whole language as a valid system of communication adequate for conversation with his peers, inherently no better or worse than the teacher's own way of speaking. The teacher will accept the fact that the rule-governed character of his own language is in some measure different from the rule-governed character of the pupil's language, but not better or worse.

What I am here sketchily supporting is a kind of policy of pluralism. It is a policy that recognizes the integrity and validity of what we call standard English as a language code of enormous communicational power; it at the same time recognizes other forms of English, nonstandard forms, that also have validity and integrity for certain groups but do not have as much communicational power. In accepting this policy the teacher must examine not only his inherited attitude toward forms other than his own and those prescribed by his school grammar books; he must examine also the nomenclature he uses in talking about dialects other than his own. He must avoid all terms that imply his own superiority.

The teacher of English as a second language in this country has to teach within the framework of English diversity; there is no one functional variety or dialect always suitable. The teacher of English as a second dialect has to accept the child's first dialect without prejudice, and then go on to help the child gain control of some variety of standard English that will broaden his area of communication—both productive and receptive. If you are in a position to help teachers do this, this is your responsibility. If you are in a position to help parents and the people of your community to accept the integrity of the children's first dialect or first language as one that is quite approvable and good in itself for its own purposes, then you have the responsibility of providing that help.

## Some Strategies for Teaching Standard English as a Second Dialect

Virginia French Allen

If language teaching is your concern, you must often have felt—as I do—that together we are working on a gigantic jigsaw puzzle. We may never live to see it fully assembled, but at least the picture is gradually taking shape, as blocks of pieces from scholarly research are brought together with other pieces laboriously compiled by classroom teachers down through the years.

There is, for example, a whole set of data being assembled in linguistics, sociology, psychology, and the newer fields of sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics—data with profound implications for second dialect teachers. The following statement draws upon findings from those fields: "The fact is that most lower-class black children who come into the classroom have a well-developed sense of language and of the power of words."[1] Most children start school with a lively interest in language. Even if a child's contacts with adults have been limited (as in certain lower-class families), he nevertheless has learned much about the power of language from the banter, taunts, and repartee of older children who have been charged with his care.

On being reminded of this fact, many a teacher can find worthwhile ways of using it. If these children do have an interest in words, for whatever reason, then they can be led to enjoy rhyming games which draw their attention to sounds—so vital a step in developing word-attack skills. Since even the youngest school child knows how words can make him feel, the power of words offers an obvious point of departure for language study. First grade children are experienced enough to dispute the thesis of the old chant, "Sticks and stones will break my bones, but names will never hurt me."

In the primary grades, children enjoy hearing and dramatizing the Rumpelstiltskin story, in which the entire plot hinges upon a name. In other old tales, they respond to the magic of "Open Sesame," and appreciate the account of the outwitting of the Cyclops through a clever

[1] Roger D. Abrahams, "Black Talk and Black Education," in *Florida FL Reporter*, Special Anthology Issue, *Linguistic-Cultural Differences and American Education* (Spring/Summer 1969): 12.

use of words. In their own lives, and through vicarious experiences, children early come to perceive how powerful a word can be. Hence it is possible for many to respond to Emily Dickinson's treatment of that theme:

A word is dead
When it is said,
Some say.
I say it just
Begins to live
That day.

Handled simply enough, by a resourceful teacher, a unit on the power of words can set pupils on the road toward language mastery. In the intermediate grades, teachers can lead children to understand that a word alone leads a very restricted life; what counts most is how words are combined. For instance, if a class has enjoyed Emily Dickinson's poem about words, the teacher may point out that no single word in that poem is very special. It is not the poet's vocabulary that produces the effect. An alphabetized list (which the students themselves may prepare) would look like this: *a, begins, day, dead, I, is, it, just, live, said, say, some, that, to, when, word.*

It can thus be seen that no word in the poem is beyond the vocabulary range of a kindergarten child. What, then, makes this a poem? It is the poet's way of arranging and combining those words. Fourth graders may be led to consider what would have happened if the poet had put the words together in this order: "When a word is said, it is dead." Or they may consider this arrangement: "Some say a word is dead when it is said."

When these alternatives are compared with the poet's choice of structures, young students will not be able to explain the difference, but some will sense that a difference exists; and a point will have been made about the role of form in language.

For a more light-hearted approach to language form, there are limericks. As many teachers have discovered, students of almost any age enjoy hearing and composing limericks, and any time so spent is worth it, since a limerick's impact depends upon the arrangement of words within a stipulated form.

To stimulate the creation of original limericks, a few of the old favorites may be introduced; for example,

There was an old man from Peru
Who dreamed he was eating his shoe.
He woke in the night
In a terrible fright,
And found it was perfectly true!

For a second dialect class, whose after-school experiences tend to be more robust than those of other students, the best limericks may be the slightly irreverent ones, e.g.,

> There was an old man from Blackheath
> Who sat on a set of false teeth.
> Said he, with a start,
> "Oh Lord! Bless my heart!
> I've bitten myself underneath!"

After a few old favorites have been heard and said, an original limerick might be started by the teacher and completed by the students, who may then make up their own. The lesson to be learned from composing limericks is that words *can be put together* to communicate various ideas and to create various effects. That lesson is at the heart of all rhetoric and style. It is also the basic point of grammar.

There are dozens of things teachers can do to show students how to increase their language power. For older students, an analysis of expert prose can help. Such a passage as this one from *Go Tell It On the Mountain* might be of interest to high school students.

> On other mornings he awoke hearing his mother singing in the kitchen, hearing his father in the bedroom behind him grunting and muttering prayers to himself as he put on his clothes; hearing, perhaps, the chatter of Sarah and the squalling of Ruth, and the radios, the clatter of pots and pans, and the voices of all the folk nearby. This morning not even the cry of a bed-spring disturbed the silence. . . .[2]

How does one begin to discuss such a passage? One possibility is to focus attention on the content: what is this writer telling us? Let's see if we agree on what usually happened in that house. Let's put the information down in the simplest possible way, starting like this:

> He heard his mother.
> His mother was singing.
> He heard his father.
> His father was . . .

Teachers acquainted with transformational grammar will recognize here another block of pieces from the jigsaw puzzle, in the construction of kernel sentences. The sentences will then be "transformed" by deleting

[2] James Baldwin, *Go Tell It On the Mountain* (New York: The Dial Press, 1953), p. 18. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

some parts, combining others, rearranging others, and so on.[3]

Whether the students actually learn to use Baldwin's syntactic patterns is not the main issue. What matters more is that the class has been alerted to the availability of nominalized verb forms (like *the chatter of Sarah* and *the squalling of Ruth*), and that the class has considered some of the options open to a speaker or a writer—options that have little to do with "correctness" in the usual school sense.

When ways of arranging words are being discussed in class, it becomes clear that a few grammatical terms like *verb*, *noun*, and *adjective* would be useful to know. Trying to talk about sentence construction without them is like trying to teach carpentry without referring to hammers and nails. Fortunately even students in the lower intermediate grades find it easy to grasp what is meant by *verb*, *noun*, and *adjective* when the teacher introduces each term in the simplest possible way. To show what a verb is, for example, the teacher writes these sentences on the board:

Please _____ it.
They don't _____ us.
Will you _____ there?

The teacher asks, "Who can think of a word that would make sense in the first blank? In the second blank? In the third?" Suggestions are elicited from each student, and all are listed on the board. The teacher then remarks, "Each of those sentences needed a *verb*, and you all thought of verbs to fill the blanks." The label VERBS is then written above the list.

In this exercise, the children have shown that they know what kind of word belongs in the verb position; they themselves have proposed the words. They now know that such words, in such sentence environments, are called verbs. There is no need to debate whether or not a verb "names an action," as many (but not all) verbs do. There is no danger that any child will think *football game* is a verb (even though to many it is an "action word"). It will be obvious that *football game* would not belong in any of those sentence slots.

The class can be introduced to the term *noun* in similar fashion, by being asked to suggest single words to fill the blanks in the following sentence frames:

I saw a _____.
The _____ is here.

Having discovered that they know "instinctively" what kind of word belongs in those slots, the students are given the label NOUN. It may

[3]There is a reason for writing the subject of the second sentence directly below the object of the first. The spacing makes it easy to guide the students through two steps (deletion of the repeated nominal, and deletion of the form of *be*) to produce "He heard his mother singing."

be useful to ask the class a question like this: "What made you think your word might belong in that blank?" A good answer would be, "Because I saw *a* before one of the blanks, and *the* before the other blank." If someone in the class mentions something about "the name of a person, place or thing" the teacher might remark, "Often a noun does name a person, place or thing, but not always. If we want to decide whether or not a certain word in a sentence is a noun, we can look to see if a word like *a* or *the* comes before it."

Teachers who introduce students to terms like *noun* and *verb* in this way are borrowing from structural linguistics, of course—a field responsible for assembling large blocks of pieces for the jigsaw puzzle of language learning. The structural linguist would then go on to mention other properties of a noun: its presence may be signaled by some determiner other than *a* or *the* (such as *some*, *this*, or *my*); a noun is the sort of word that regularly changes its form to signal plurality, and so on. These facts may eventually be conveyed to second dialect students, in order to round out their understanding of what a noun looks like and does. But the first introduction to *noun*, *verb*, and *adjective* ought to be kept simple and casual. It is a mistake to bury the class under a heap of information. In life, one does not learn everything about a person or a group on first acquaintance; knowledge deepens gradually, after the initial impression has been formed. In borrowing from linguistic science or from any other scholarly discipline, teachers need to take their cue from life.

To introduce the term *adjective*, the following may be written on the board:

> He is a very _____ man.
> That is too _____ for me.

Once again various possibilities for filling each slot are elicited and written on the board, and the term ADJECTIVE is written above the suggested words. Later, students may be led to observe that adjectives are words which can add *-er* or *-est* (or be preceded by *more* or *most*), and that an adjective's place is often between *a* or *the* and its noun. For a start, however, the lesson imparted by "He is a very _____ man" will do.

After these three grammatical terms have acquired meaning by being attached to the children's own perception of language, the class may decide what can be done with a sample of "Tarzan talk," which consists solely of nouns, adjectives, and verbs without inflectional endings. For example,

> Big crocodile swim river. Pretty girl swim river. Girl see crocodile. Crocodile see girl. Crocodile look hungry. Crocodile open mouth. Eat girl?

Using the above as raw material for a story, the class decides what

to do about the first sentence. What other words should be added? Someone may suggest, "A big crocodile is swimming in a river." Another may propose, "A big crocodile was swimming in the river." A third may choose to combine the first two sentences: "A big crocodile and a pretty girl were swimming in a river." A fourth may think the story would be improved by saying, "While a pretty girl was swimming in a river, a big crocodile was swimming there, too."

Guided by the teacher, the differences may be discussed, and the effects of the various arrangements may be weighed. In the course of such a discussion, students come to understand several important points about language. They discover that words like *girl*, *crocodile*, *river*, *big*, *pretty*, *swim*, *look*, and *eat* (which they have learned to call nouns, adjectives, and verbs, respectively) often need the help of words like *a*, *the*, *was*, and *in* when they are put together to form the kinds of sentences most people speak. (This fact, of course, is the basis for the distinction between content words and function words.) In addition, the students notice that it makes a difference whether one says *is* or *was*, *are* or *were*. They also observe that certain endings (like *-ing*) are added to verbs under certain circumstances. Furthermore, they learn that sometimes a single idea may be expressed in two or more different ways, and that skill in communication depends upon choosing among alternative structures and forms. These are all concepts which the language teacher is responsible for developing, and a start should be made in the intermediate years.

Another exercise leading to a grasp of these concepts is suitable for junior or senior high school. Classified ads clipped from a newspaper are distributed among the students, and each student interprets his ad to the class. For instance, "LOST: Child's glasses, brown rims" may be interpreted as "Some child has lost his glasses. They have brown rims," or "Glasses with brown rims have been lost by a child," or "A pair of child's glasses with brown rims has been lost." The student is encouraged to explain the ad in as many different ways as possible. This sort of exercise develops versatility with regard to surface structures. It prepares the student to recognize synonymous sentences when he meets them in his reading. Practice in comparing various types of sentences is excellent preparation for the reading of textbooks in the subject-matter fields.

All too often, the development of skill in recognizing synonymous sentences is left to chance. Teachers have traditionally called attention to synonyms for individual *words*, but less has been done with alternative ways of handling larger units. Hence, in many classes, students need practice in deciding which two sentences from a set of three have approximately the same meaning. Sets like the following may be considered and discussed:

1. (a) The boys did not mention their suspicions to the mechanic.

(b) The boys did not say anything to the suspicious mechanic.
(c) The boys did not tell the mechanic that they were suspicious.

2. (a) Reaching out desperately, Frank grasped Ken's shirt.
(b) Desperately, Frank reached out and grasped Ken's shirt.
(c) Frank reached Ken, who desperately grasped his shirt.

3. (a) Ed had to stop running long enough to catch his breath.
(b) Although Ed longed to stop and catch his breath, he had to keep running.
(c) Ed longed to stop and catch his breath, but he had to keep running.

Having discovered which sentence of each set is *not* synonymous with the other two, students may experiment with other ways of expressing its meaning, for the purpose of finding out how many different surface structures are available for signaling essentially the same thought content.

This much grammar is enough to enable a class to discuss kernel sentences, such as the ones that emerge from a sorting out of the ideas from the Baldwin passage cited earlier in this paper. With this much grammar, too, it is possible to direct attention to Baldwin's own use of forms and arrangements (e.g., *the chatter of Ruth* and *the cry of a bed-spring*). Students can now be guided to note the significant absence of adjectives from this passage, and to see that *chatter* and *cry* can be used as either verbs or nouns. They can also discuss ways of combining sentences without undue dependence upon the overworked conjunction *and*.

Grammar is appreciated by second dialect students when it actually does help them figure out why some ways of combining words seem more satisfying than others. It is human nature to enjoy learning how a magician creates his illusions; it should be just as innately human to want to know how a master of language produces his effects, especially since the props *he* uses are available to all.

Language power is not a mere schoolmarm matter of choosing the one "correct" form; it means weighing the various alternatives and deciding which form conveys the message most accurately, most clearly, and with the greatest force.

Throughout the upper grades, and on into high school, students need guided practice in putting ideas into form. In many classes, this is achieved by means of a group composition activity, starting with an oral discussion on some topic of interest to the class.

During the discussion, the teacher uses the chalkboard to jot down phrases which will serve as reminders of ideas expressed orally by members of the class. After several points have been raised, the students next suggest ways of phrasing those points, and the suggested sentences are written on the board. When the sentences that seem most satisfactory to the class have been selected, they are arranged in an agreed-upon order. As a final step, the passage which has resulted from the

collaboration is copied by the students, with due attention to conventions of spelling, punctuation, and social usage; and the best copies are "published" on the class bulletin board.

In schools where teachers and students collaborate on exploring the resources of language, it is possible to keep the rules of spelling, punctuation, and social usage in proper perspective. Grammar is seen as a guide to the construction of various kinds of sentences, not as a set of arbitrary prohibitions. The language sense of the child is recognized, respected, and sharpened. Throughout the grades, instruction stresses what can be done with language, rather than what ought not to be done; and teachers build upon the children's natural interest in words.

If it is true that even the disadvantaged child comes to school with a lively awareness of the power of language, then the logical plan for second dialect teachers would seem to entail many activities designed to build upon the student's own language sense. What happens in schools where such activities take place? What kinds of dividends accrue?

One encouraging result comes as a pleasant surprise to some teachers: the students' reading improves. Whenever students pay special attention to the patterns of arrangement and form used for communication in English, there is almost inevitably an improvement in reading.

At the conclusion of a second dialect project involving college freshmen, San-su Lin reports: "After a year of working systematically and intensively with various patterns of English, the experimental students were apparently better equipped to read passages which required alert attention to structural signals." In fact, according to scores on the Cooperative English Tests, "The experimental group made greater gains in reading . . . than did the members of the control group, in spite of the fact that the program for the control group gave more attention to reading, as such."[4]

A second gain, though one which is harder to assess objectively, is a gain in control over the conventions of standard English. In classrooms where teachers and students collaborate on discovering what language can do, spelling and punctuation and distinctions of social usage are kept in perspective. They are not allowed to dominate the scene. Spelling and punctuation are viewed as matters to be dealt with while *editing*—a process generally separate from creating or composing. Not that the need for learning to edit can be overlooked; it is a fact of life. Almost everyone has to edit, whenever language is prepared for the public eye or ear.

Furthermore, when the students' own dialect differs significantly from the one used for "wider communication" (i.e., when their home

[4]San-su C. Lin, *Pattern Practice in the Teaching of Standard English to Students with a Non-Standard Dialect* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1965), p. 143.

dialect is not standard English), editing often has to include features of grammatical usage. For help in deciding which features need special treatment, the teacher turns to a growing body of linguistic research.[5]

From a study of linguists' findings, the classroom teacher may draw several significant conclusions. For one, it is misleading to speak of nonstandard English as if it were a single dialect: there is more than one variety of nonstandard. Moreover, different individuals are influenced in different ways by exposure to standard English. Nevertheless, teachers will find it helpful to learn all that can be learned about linguistic systems operating among speakers of nonstandard dialects, for insights into their students' difficulties and for ideas on dealing with them.

One characteristic of the grammar of nonstandard English is *economy*. For instance, the nonstandard speaker often does not use two signals for plurality when one will do. Hence he may say "two girl" because the *two* already conveys plurality. For this reason, practice on plural forms of nouns ought to deal largely with combinations like *ten cars*, *many rooms*, or *some toys*—combinations of nouns with other plural markers. It may be a waste of time simply to practice plural forms without them, since in the students' own grammatical system the *-s* might be quite consistently used with nouns unaccompanied by other signals of plurality.

The same feature of economy is noted with respect to verb forms. When the sentence contains a past-time signal like *yesterday* or *in 1967*, the nonstandard system does not require a second signaling of past time. Hence a speaker may say, "They go there yesterday." For such students, practice exercises on "the past tense" need to focus on the use of past forms in sentences containing some other past-time signal (a word or an adverbial phrase relating to past time). It may be pointless merely to practice past verb forms in isolation, eliciting *went* in response to *go*, *saw*, in response to *see*, and so forth.

If it seems necessary or desirable to focus attention directly upon *went*, a game may be conducted with a context that clearly signals past time. For instance, the students may be challenged to think of place names beginning with the letter *W*, to complete this sentence: "Last week I went to _____." The entire sentence should be repeated as each place name is proposed. Other activities designed to offer practice on standard English forms, I have described in detail elsewhere.[6] They may seem worlds away from units on exploring word power, yet all

[5] See, for example, articles by William Labov, William A. Stewart, Beryl Bailey, Jean Malmstrom, and others, in *Florida FL Reporter*, Special Anthology Issue.

[6] See, for example, "Teaching Standard English as a Second Dialect," in *Teaching High School Composition*, ed. Gary Tate and Edward P. J. Corbett (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 358–76; and "A Second Dialect Is Not a Foreign Language," in *Linguistics and the Teaching of Standard English to Speakers of Other Languages or Dialects*, Monograph Series on Languages and Linguistics no. 22, ed. James E. Alatis (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1969), pp. 189–202.

are means of directing attention to the surface structure of English while building upon students' natural interest in what the language can do.

Luckily, despite all that some schools have done to dull the student's enjoyment of language, the individual's interest in word power persists, latently at least, throughout his school career. Teachers at all grade levels have caught encouraging glimpses of it.

The high school years are not too late for discovering and strengthening a sense of language. It is still alive, even among students who have been labeled "linguistically handicapped." Nor is the nursery school too soon to start. What is needed throughout the grades is a way of attending to the conventions of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical usage without obscuring the main point; namely, that English offers a rich variety of resources for expression and communication and that anyone can learn to use them.

Of course, we cannot put the matter to students in precisely those terms. But we can—and some teachers do—begin with a child's interest in words and his innate pleasure in wordplay, and then lead him to recognize the linguistic repertoire he has already developed, to enlarge it, and to become interested in what *can* be done with language, rather than what *ought not* to be done.

## TESOL: Methods and Materials in Early Childhood Education

Muriel R. Saville-Troike

A variety of methods for teaching language have been suggested and tried with all ages of students and with varying degrees of success. Particularly in early childhood education, an emphasis has often been placed on "fostering attitudes" and "developing interests," accompanied by little or no direct language instruction. Some educators have felt that children "catch" a second language by exposure, much as they catch the measles, but their record of academic failure suggests that this is not the case. Others have placed an emphasis on learning vocabulary lists with regard to the sounds or structure of the language. School districts in several states have added a year of instruction, usually before the first grade, which ranges from a year of concentrated language study with specially prepared teachers and materials to a year of unstructured activity, often assigned to the most inexperienced teachers. Some gains have been reported in the academic achievement of students in the special language classes, but there are social disadvantages inherent in any program which segregates children with different native languages. In addition, the extra year may make subsequent behavior problems and dropouts more likely.

Every child learns a great deal of his language from his peer group, and one of his strongest motivations for learning language is his desire to communicate with them. Programs which assign non-English-speaking students to a separate classroom are thus failing to utilize one of the most powerful psychological factors in language learning. This motivation can be fostered by the heterogeneous assignment of students to classes, and by grouping procedures within the classrooms to create both the need and the opportunity for students of different language backgrounds to talk to each other. Motivation is a crucial component in learning, and consideration of this factor should underlie our selection of appropriate techniques and materials.

Our approach to teaching English as a second language is based on a traditional axiom in education: accept the student where he is and build upon his previously acquired capabilities. We know that a child does not begin learning when he comes to school. Education begins in infancy, and so does language learning. He masters much

of the sound system and grammatical structure of at least one language by the time he is five years old, even if we don't consider it a prestigious or even standard dialect of that language. When we fail to recognize a student's native linguistic resources, we keep him from progressing as rapidly as his experiences and intellectual development will allow.

While it is much easier for a young child to acquire a second language than for an adult to, even he cannot learn it as he did his first. For one thing, a child entering kindergarten has spent his waking hours for four years mastering his native language, but the school has only a few hours a day to bring the child to this same level of competence in the second language if he is to achieve "on grade level" in first grade in an English-speaking school. This is one reason why the presentation of sounds, structure, and vocabulary must be made in a way which efficiently shortcuts the time required for learning English. The key to this efficiency is in the selection of linguistic material to be taught and in the ordering of structures for sequential presentation.

There are a number of guidelines that apply to all direct language instruction. For one thing, learning a new language system involves developing a new set of habits, and practice is essential to success. But students come to second language learning with different levels of experience, different degrees of interest, and different rates of learning. Language material should therefore be graded, with easier structures presented first. Because language learning is cumulative, new structures will build on what has already been learned. Most students do not master a concept or skill in one lesson; there is also a need for continued drill while habits are firmly established.

Methods and materials in language instruction should help set a pattern of success for students learning English. Opportunities to practice mistakes should be minimized, and trial-and-error learning or haphazard or selective reinforcement should be discouraged. Where possible, the instructional materials should be based on a contrastive analysis of standard English and the students' language system.

No more than ten to twelve students should be placed in a single group for most language teaching activities. A teacher cannot maintain close enough contact with more students, and would not be able to monitor individual problems and correct errors before the students have a chance to practice them. If possible, students should be arranged in a semicircle. This makes student interaction easier, and allows the teacher to maintain better contact than when students are sitting in rows of chairs or desks. During group response, the teacher should move around and "tune in" to different individuals, to check on their pronunciation. Students should not be called upon in a particular order, but the teacher should call on them at random to hold their attention. For the same reason, a student should not be called on until after a question has been asked or directions given. If a student knows he will not be called on, he is likely not to listen further. In language

drills, a brisk tempo should be maintained to keep the students' interest and attention. Students will get bored if a drill is too slow.

Even when concentrating on teaching the phonemes of English, the teacher should not present or practice them in isolation. Speech sounds occur as parts of words, and words as parts of sentences. Language is a way of conveying meaning, and this essential characteristic should not be left out of language lessons.

The teacher should not attempt to teach students a phonemic distinction he does not make in his own dialect. The teacher may not differentiate, for instance, between *cot* and *caught* or *pin* and *pen*. Even if the teacher masters such distinctions for drill purposes, he will probably revert to his native pronunciation in context. Students quickly recognize such inconsistency, and may be confused by it or consider the teacher a "fake."

The vocabulary content for language lessons should be selected for immediate need and usefulness, to make learning and retention more likely. New elements of pronunciation, grammatical structures, or vocabulary should be introduced only in the contexts of elements which have been previously taught. It is more desirable to teach the full forms of language (*He is coming*) before the contracted forms (*He's coming*). After a student has learned the full form, he can go on to learn the contraction, the question, and the negative constructions. If he has learned the contracted form first, however, it may not be obvious how to derive questions and negatives from it. In order to clarify meaning, translate when necessary and where possible.

Language teaching is not something which goes on just during the scheduled language period. A wide variety of activities during the day should be used to reinforce patterns which have been introduced in that period. Language drills can be organized into play activities or meaningful communication exchanges, or made available in game form for the students whenever they have free time to choose an activity. Primary-age students, for instance, may group pictures on a flannel board or paste them in a scrapbook, sorted according to which words begin with the same sound.

The immediate goals of teaching English as a second language in the United States are to have the students able to discriminate and produce its distinctive sounds (the phonemes), to interpret and produce its basic sentence patterns (both orally and in writing), and to use an adequate vocabulary. These elements are best taught in the following order: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Very early in the language program, the phonological contrasts existing in English but not in the students' native language should be taught. This can be done by teaching the concept of "same-different" as applied to objects and then to the sounds of English. The teacher can start with minimal pairs, illustrated with pictures or actions whenever possible, and have the students repeat them: *chair/share, choose/shoes,*

or *chip/ship*. Then he can include the words in minimal pair sentences. Students may dramatize each sentence or identify an appropriate picture: *I have a chip, I have a ship;* or *I am watching dishes, I am washing dishes.* Next, the teacher can expand the pairs to sets of similar words for developing recognition drills: *sheep, ship, cheap, chip;* and *beet, bit, bait, bat.* After students have repeated these words, have them play games appropriate to their age and interest level to provide group and individual pronunciation drill, using the words included in the recognition drills. For example, cut small shoes from colored paper, put them in a bag, and have each student in turn draw one shoe. When the class asks him which color shoe he chooses, the individual student says something like, "I choose (color) shoes."

The basic sentence patterns of English may be introduced and practiced through the variety of structured activities, including the types of pattern drills suggested below.

1. *Mimicry-Memorization.* Students imitate a model of a sentence such as *John is running*, and then repeat it until the response is memorized.
2. *Chain drill.* One student makes a statement, then another student repeats the same statement, and so on, each student making sure that he repeats what the previous student said, without changing the statement.
3. *Substitution.* Students substitute a word for another of the same grammatical class, as a noun for a noun. For example,
   Teacher: I have a *book.*
   pencil
   Student: I have a *pencil.*
   Teacher: pen
   Student: I have a *pen.*
4. *Replacement.* Students replace one element with another, as a pronoun for a noun.
   Teacher: John has a book.
   he
   Student: *He* has a book.
   Teacher: it
   Student: He has *it.*
5. *Conversion.* A student replaces one form of a word with another, as past for present.
   Teacher: John is running.
   Student: John ran.
6. *Expansion.* The students are given a word to be added to a sentence.
   Teacher: The boy is running.
   big

Student: The *big* boy is running.
Teacher: fast
Student: The big boy is running *fast*.

7. *Transformation.* The student must make a change in word order, as from statement to question, or affirmative statement to negative statement.
Teacher: John is running.
Student: Is John running?
Student: John is not running.

When the structural framework has been learned using a limited number of words, the required vocabulary can easily be added. This is not to suggest that the vocabulary is not important; the question is only one of initial emphasis and perspective. The most important words to include in the early English lessons are the function words needed to express relationships in the basic sentence patterns. These include articles, prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliaries, interrogatives, and modals. Good sources for the content words to be used in language drills are the texts for other subject areas the students are studying.

Teaching the vocabulary of a second language is not merely teaching different sequences of sounds to express the same meanings as "equivalent" words have in the students' native languages. Speakers of each language view reality in terms of different cultural and psychological frameworks. This means that learning a second language involves learning a new cultural framework, a new way to categorize experience, and new ways of relating to members of another social group. For a teacher to be effective in this domain, he must teach English in meaningful situations and within an educational environment which accepts the students without threatening their self or group identity.

## Some Principles of Bilingual and Bidialectal Education

Beryl Loftman Bailey

At a recent Georgetown Round Table conference, Virginia French Allen contributed a paper, "A Second Dialect Is Not a Foreign Language." Her main concern was to establish a very clear distinction between the principles of second language learning and those of second dialect learning. Before proceeding with this paper, therefore, I want to summarize the Allen arguments. She begins, and rightly so, with the areas of common concern and establishes five points of similarity: (1) the contrastive analysis technique; (2) the acceptance of the home language as an equally valid system of communication as the target language; (3) the accordance of the central role in the program to the grammatical structure rather than the vocabulary; (4) the presentation of the material in a series of small steps, each step arising out of the previous one; and (5) the emphasis on habit-formation, so that success is measured in terms of the pupil's ability to produce utterances in the target language.[1]

Included in the above are, of course, similarities in classroom techniques—the procedures including mimicry, repetition, and substitution. But it is exactly here, Allen points out, that difficulties begin to arise. Because most second dialect speakers have acquired a passive competence in the target language, they may need to be convinced of the need for the mimicry-repetition-substitution procedure, for they will not submit to such drills until they themselves feel the need for them.

One consequence of this is that whereas the pupil in ESL must be taught before he is tested, the pupil in ESD needs to be tested before he is taught in order to define his areas of need and to convince him of that specific need. The kinds of sentences included in the drills will also differ greatly. The meanings of sentences are generally already known by the second dialect speaker, so that nothing is achieved in having him repeat endlessly "this is a book." Any such drills must

[1] In *Linguistics and the Teaching of Standard English to Speakers of Other Languages or Dialects*, Monograph Series on Languages and Linguistics no. 22, ed. James E. Alatis (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1969), p. 190.

be built into a situation in which "this is a book" would be a natural rather than a contrived response.

In summation, therefore, Allen made the point that although in general the techniques of ESL and ESD teaching may be similar, the psychology is different, and we dare not lose sight of that fact in designing our program. For this reason I want to direct your attention to some very real problems inherent in the second dialect situation. Among these are the fact that for second dialect speakers we have a quasi-second language situation, one in which the language of instruction in the school is recognizably different from that of the community of learners. This means that these children operate under some, though not all, of the handicaps of the foreign language speaker, and that the mere resemblance of their language to English does not put them to any great advantage in acquiring effective use of the standard, or in understanding all that is taught them in this mode.

Indeed, the reverse may very well be true. No matter how feasible it may be from the sociological point of view to regard ESL and ESD as a single language, for pedagogical purposes the dialectal lines of distinction must be clearly drawn, lest both teacher and pupil be lulled into a false sense of complacency. For one thing, we cannot assume that teachers trained in traditional methods in the language arts are adequately equipped for the new classrooms which the current demand for equal educational opportunities have foisted upon us. We know that proficiency in English and in the methods of teaching it to native speakers does not mean proficiency in teaching it to non-native speakers. Nor can we assume that teachers trained to teach English as a foreign or second language can supply the needs of our schools. There are not enough of them, and even they can at best be but lame substitutes, for their training has traditionally been either for the high school level where the goal has never been to produce effective users of the language, capable of conceptualizing and expressing themselves in it; or for the elementary level, where a second language coordinator has at stated hours of the day siphoned off a few pupils for tutorial instruction in English. What we urgently need today are teachers capable of giving second dialect instruction in their own classrooms.

Secondly, I would point to the considerable degree of ambivalence on the part of the community to the second language approach, even where modified for the purpose. In many cases where there is strong community consciousness of the general goals of education, and where parents vigorously demand equal educational opportunities for their children, we are apt to find a surprising resentment to the concept of teaching English as a second dialect, with consequent lack of interest in the techniques for teaching the very medium through which all other instruction must take place.

One very real problem lies in the fact that the necessary and sufficient environment for acquisition of standard English is not readily available

in urban ghettoes and rural communities. The situation is not too promising, since we can only look forward to less, not more, integration in our schools in the years immediately ahead. It must be noted that in our urban schools we have had nothing more than superficial integration, for with busing there has been no provision made for the children to become immersed in the culture of the communities to which they are bused, and without cultural immersion meaningful communication remains difficult. If full and natural use of the language of instruction is to be achieved, then some radical changes in the structures within which the children are currently being taught must be made. Some efforts have already been made, but we need to intensify our search for ways of simulating environments which will foster ready acquisition of concepts peculiar to the target culture.

The third difficulty lies in the dearth of materials and local personnel for teaching English to this group. In recent years some texts have been devised, but these are far from general acceptance, and there is still a tendency to modify the older texts which largely reflected a reliance on the native speaker's intuitive sense for acceptable usage. Experience has shown us that such texts remain inadequate tools of instruction for children who lack this intuitive sense. True, there have been some signal successes with these inappropriate tools, but for every success there have been countless failures. Besides, such successes can almost always be traced to teacher ingenuity or pupil motivation, neither of which can be relied upon as givens in the average classroom. The less ingenious teacher, who in these situations is also likely to be less well-equipped professionally, finds little help in his texts for the most serious classroom problems, and is further handicapped in not being fully trained to interpret even those guides which have been prepared for him. Further, if we take into consideration the fact that a large body of the teachers in such schools is drawn from the adult population who are themselves limited in their use of English, we can then see how complicated the situation really is.

Let me now turn to a principle which is basic to all language-learning situations, and which is indeed so commonplace that it often goes unnoticed. That is, that one must use language if one is to become proficient in it. Thanks to Einar Haugen[2] and others, it is now an accepted fact that speakers of social or nonstandard dialects are bidialectal, having passive control of the standard, even though they may lack active control. Those teachers, therefore, who limit their pupil's experience with language to situations in which the teacher does most of the talking while the pupil responds in one- or two-word phrases, are clearly misguided in their efforts. In the course of learning his first

[2] Einar Haugen, "Bilingualism and Bidialectalism," in *Social Dialects and Language Learning*, ed. Roger W. Shuy (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1964), pp. 124–26.

language, every child indulges in considerable play with language—with its words, its structures, and its sounds. We need, therefore, to extend our language drills and pattern practice exercises, and to provide youngsters with opportunities for experimentation with language and for language play. The pupil must get equal time in interaction with his teacher.

One question is often asked, and indeed was tackled by the NCTE Task Force on language programs for the disadvantaged: "Where does one begin formal instruction in the language arts?"[3] For one possible answer I refer to a 1966 article in which I called attention to the dilemma we face in our school programs with the sociologists and psychologists on the one hand arguing for "freedom" for the pupil, a freedom which will provide him with ample opportunities for enriching his environment, for enlarging his concepts and his universe, and for utilizing language for increasing cognitive purposes and for communicating the results of his cognitions; and the language teachers and educators in general on the other hand, who, despite their best efforts at "accepting the children's language," know that it is their duty to teach usage, since in the final analysis it is by the usage that the individual will be judged and rated.

I shall reiterate here what I suggested in that article; namely that our programs should cater to both needs, since indeed it is vitally important that these seemingly opposing goals be met. As I said then,

> This is . . . not an "either-or" situation. Both goals must be achieved within the framework of our school structure and, since it would appear that the approaches are mutually exclusive, then *some* provision must be made in the curriculum for both types of activity. While there is a consensus that the opportunities for language development must be provided throughout the school life (beginning with the preschool years), that the environment must be enriched to provide exposure to good literature and good language models, and that the children must be stimulated and encouraged to imitate the models and to use the new vocabulary items provided by their new experiences, not nearly so much agreement attaches to the amount of attention to be given to the so-called incorrect usage.
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> I would like to suggest here that there is room for both approaches throughout the curriculum, and, what is more, that the sooner the intervention takes place, the better. I would suggest, too, that the two be kept separate, that is, that a short period of the school day be reserved for drills in correct usage, in which utterances are initiated not by the children, but by the teacher, who will have chosen the

[3] For information on the operations and findings of the NCTE Task Force on Teaching English to the Disadvantaged, see *Language Programs for the Disadvantaged*, Richard Corbin and Muriel Crosby, chairmen (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1965).

> patterns to be drilled from the children's experience. This means that the teacher must be . . . prepared, with the use of appropriate props and reinforcement, to structure situations in which the forms to be learned will be drilled in rote fashion. For the preschool child the drills can be built into a play situation; as he grows older, the props will be gradually removed, and the drills as well as the rules underlying them will become the sole content of the language lesson period.[4]

I cannot stress too much my conviction that a good school program must give considerable attention to this preparatory period, and that indeed no matter where the child's education begins, conscious language-learning activities must be incorporated into the first years of school life. The NCTE Task Force rightly rejected the suggestion that no formal language instruction be given the preschool and kindergarten child, for this would have been to deny one of the most elementary practices in language teaching, the occasional correction which every mother gives her child, this correction often taking the form of a game or drill played by mother and child together. Accordingly, the Task Force recommended that "the development of skill in language and concept formation be the overriding concern of preschools for disadvantaged children and that emphasis on all other objectives be reduced accordingly."[5] Already in preschool programs, situations must be contrived in which children may develop verbal as well as nonverbal manipulative skills. A number of concepts and relations which do not lend themselves to visual illustration, such as the either/or relation, or the concepts of short or big, must be taught and drilled through games, choral activities, and the like.

The Task Force was not nearly as imaginative, however, in its recommendation that "nonstandard English dialect be a concern at the preschool level only to the extent that it interferes with the acquisition of fundamental language learnings."[6] Indeed, it is difficult to understand this recommendation in light of the care which needs to be taken in teaching the concepts of standard sentence patterns. A pattern—such as that which underlies "this box is big," "this box is little," or "this circle is red"—is as much an attempt to remediate the nonstandard dialect "this box big" or "this circle red" as it is an effort to teach the pattern necessary for communicating the concept of bigness, redness, or length. There are grammatical features of the nonstandard dialect which need to be taught at an early age, not because they interfere with the acquisition of fundamental language learnings, but because

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[4] Beryl Bailey, "A Crucial Problem In Language Intervention As It Relates to the Disadvantaged," *IRCD Bulletin* 2 (Summer 1966): 1–2.

[5] *Language Programs for the Disadvantaged*, p. 65.

[6] Ibid., p. 70.

our research documents the fact that these are features which persist long past high school, and which seem least amenable to correction in later school life. Thus the argument that they do not impede comprehension does not seem to be a valid one for deferring the learning of the use of grammatical forms such as the verb "to be" to late elementary or high school.

We have already been at great pains to establish the right of black English to be regarded as a fully developed linguistic system in its own right, and indeed this has been the basis of the arguments thus far made in this paper. I want to take time out now to point to another side of the picture, not only because it holds true for speakers of black English, but also because it may throw some light on problems we encounter in teaching the speakers of other languages. My guess, however, is that it applies particularly to second dialect speakers. Let us observe for a moment the characteristic variation in performance of second dialect speakers, in the hope that some valuable inferences may be drawn from these observations. Language systems as described are, after all, linguists' artifacts, the necessary operations of their craft, but teachers must daily encounter the stark fact that individual performances are subject to considerable intraidiolectal variation; that is, that a given speaker constantly shifts style or code for no apparent reason whatsoever.

Taking our cues from the sociolinguists and psychologists, we now maintain that all code switching is internally or externally motivated, and that one of the goals of our language teaching for black nonstandard speakers must be to give them the ability to switch from one dialect to the other in appropriate situations. But they are already doing exactly that, switching from one level of nonstandard to another! I shall return to this seemingly innocuous goal later.

Let me pass to another consequence of this line of argument, to what has now become the preoccupation of one whole school of educationists. The concerns and goals are admirable indeed. They stem from a genuine desire to upgrade the reading abilities of black children who year after year score disturbingly low on standardized reading tests. Some are virtually illiterate. Now, because it has been demonstrated that those children in bilingual situations who first learn to read in their native language turn out to be better readers of English or whatever the school language may be than those who begin in the second language, it has been automatically assumed that black children will be motivated to read if the early materials are presented in black English, and that the transfer to standard English would then be facilitated.

To this date I have consistently resisted the temptation to join my fellow dialectologists in both these pedagogical goals, not because of any proven lack of validity to their claims, but because they run counter to my linguistic, sociological, and pedagogical sense. I propose to support my point of view by examining a few language samples

of children aged six through eleven in the Washington, D.C. area. These represent urban language which without doubt we may regard as characteristic of black English.

Although it might work for bilingual children, I have remained suspicious of the "switching" goal for bidialectal children in our schools. For one thing, those remarkable individuals who do have the ability to switch from nonstandard to standard speech and back at will certainly did not acquire this skill by being taught. Also, the goal of switching might be laudable, but it does not take into account that the closer two languages are in structure, the harder it is for a speaker of one to learn to speak the other perfectly. If we examine the speech of children expected to function in both standard and black English, we see the unpredictable variation in linguistic performance which makes me raise the entire question of the practicality of teaching children to keep dialects apart, while retaining both, as the goal of our efforts.

If we look at some selected dialogue of black children, we find shifting from black English to the standard and back with no apparent motivation.[7] The speaker identified as GJ remarks in one situation, "I *ain't had* my play clothes on" and "I *did not*," and in another, "No, *that's not* cash money," "*That ain't no* cash money," "You *don't know* what *you talking* about," and "*It ain't not*." GJ is apparently equally comfortable with the dialect "I ain't had," "that ain't no," and "it ain't not" as with the standard "I did not," and "that's not." Or take the utterance by MJ, who plainly switches from "we were" to "we was" and ends his question with a tag marking the sentence as black English: ". . . that when *we were* playing . . . *we was* going up to playground, *wasn't it?*" MJ has, too, a problem with the past tense of the verb *fall:* "She *felled off* dat fence," "She *ain't fall from* the high part, she *fa . . . fell from* the low to the ground." It could, of course, be argued here that these forms are motivated by context: that *felled* preceded a word beginning with a vowel in "she felled off dat fence," and that where a consonant followed, the form without /d/ was spoken, and that *fall* was reserved for the position after *ain't*. But where would this leave us with the same speaker's earlier utterance, "He ain't brang it"? Or how do we interpret the two utterances by JD, "They *weren't supposed* to have it," and "They *been writing* all kinds of things," where the first seems standard and the second nonstandard? Or again, there is a series of questions asked by MJ of his father: "You building school?" "Do you stay there where you work at for lunch?" "Don't nothing bother you?" "Ded, have you ever built a school up before?" "What's

[7] The extracts which follow are from *Conversations in a Negro American Dialect*, transcribed and edited by Bengt Loman (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1967). The extracts have been regularized orthographically to focus on syntax rather than the phonology as originally intended by the author.

the name of the school?" and "Wherever you work at now?" We might argue that MJ is shifting between formal and informal speech, but again the motivation evades us.

Any detailed examination of this material shows that at ages six through eleven the children control both standard and nonstandard dialects of English, but that they do not seem to make any distinction between the two, nor is there any evidence that whatever shifting takes place is externally motivated. Indeed, they operate as if there were a single language, so that the elements of both forms are likely to appear in any given utterance.

Let us now return to the question of teaching black children to read. Since the texts which I have seen so far all adopt standard orthography, and since—as I have demonstrated above—the children seem to be equally able to express themselves in standard and nonstandard syntax, it seems to me unfortunate that so much energy has been put into preparing materials written in the nonstandard. There must be ways of capitalizing on what the children know of the standard in our programs, and teaching them to read it—which is after all only another mode of receiving messages in it—must be one of them.

I shall now wind up where I began. The techniques for bilingual and bidialectal teaching situations, though superficially similar, must in practice be quite different. While the bilingual child may indeed profit from learning to read in his home language first, this is not necessarily so for the bidialectal child. The drills to which the bilingual child is exposed must be modified, and so must the entire learning situation, if the bidialectal child is to become comfortable in the use of classroom English. This means that we may need to train or retrain our teachers in the principles of second language or second dialect learning, and, what is more, to give to such trained teachers the freedom to devise new materials or use previously prepared materials in such a way as to serve the specific purposes of those children who are regularly classified as speakers of black English.

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